

ROM

MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

volume 40:number 4

2008 spring

**Discover Charles
Darwin's life and
work — Now
at the ROM**

Plus: 150 years later
Darwin's theories
are still helping
today's biologists
assess issues such
as the impact of
invasive species.

Darwin's

Legacy

Spring 2008

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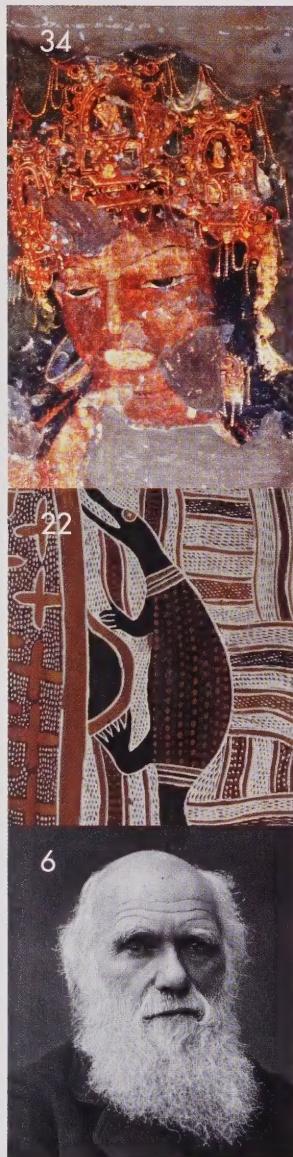
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On the Cover

Pool frog

(*Rana lessonae*)

Photo © Jan Ševčík,
Czech Republic

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CONTRIBUTORS

Correction Note

In the Winter 2007 issue of ROM magazine, the article "Fashioning a New Photography" on pages 32-43 inadvertently omitted the credit for the C4 Advisory Committee whose work was integral to bringing the C4 fashion event together. The article's authors would also like to thank the fashion designers and photographers once again for making the event possible.

The ROM salutes:

The C4 Advisory Committee

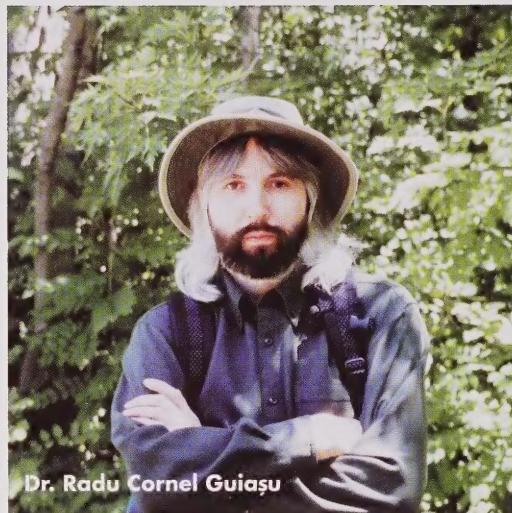
Bronwyn Aikens, public relations & production, Milkmaid & Co. • Daniel Faria, director, Monte Clark Gallery • Susan Langdon, executive director, Toronto Fashion Incubator • David Livingstone, journalist • Clara Northcott, Northcott Communications Inc. • Alexandra Palmer, curator, Royal Ontario Museum • Thanks also to William and Patricia Harris, Mary Susanne Lamont, Susan and Steven Langdon, and the Friends of Textiles & Costume for their generous support of the C4 fashion shoot.

The C4 Fashion Designers Joyce Gunhouse & Judy Cornish for comrags, David Dixon, Franco Mirabelli, Jeremy Laing, Joeffer Caoc, Izzy Camilleri, Alia & Jamil Juma for Juma, Lida Baday, Jennifer Halchuk & Richard Lyle for Mercy, Paddye Mann, Pat McDonagh, Kimberley Newport Mimran for Pink Tartan. • **The C4**

Photographers Alex vs Alex; Graydon Sheppard; Talia Shipman; George Whiteside



The ROM's C4 Advisory Committee members among the C4 fashions. From left to right front: Alexandra Palmer, Clara Northcott, David Livingstone; standing second from the left, Bronwyn Aikens; and standing at the far right, Susan Langdon. Daniel Faria is not pictured.



Dr. Radu Cornel Guiasu

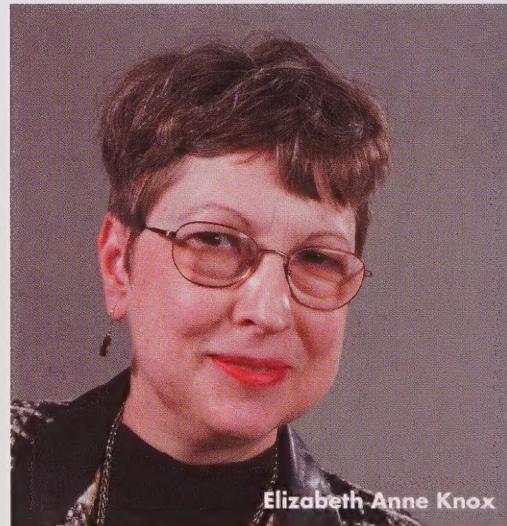
As a professor in the Environmental and Health Studies Program at York University's Glendon College, Radu studies and teaches aspects of conservation biology, ecology, evolutionary biology, and animal behaviour. His published studies are based on work conducted in the laboratory, in museum collections (including the ROM's Invertebrate and Ichthyology collections), and on hundreds of field trips. During walks through the woods on and around the beautiful Glendon campus, Radu has developed a growing appreciation for the surprising and constantly changing local species diversity, which includes many interesting exotic, as well as native, species.

In-depth exploration of current biodiversity issues led him to identify and study the gaps and contrasts between what we actually know about non-native species and the claims often made about their impact on the environment. Radu is currently writing a book based on this research.

Elizabeth Anne Knox

As a researcher in South Asian art histo-

ry, Elizabeth has curated a number of exhibits at the ROM since 1985, most notably the former Buddhist and Hindu Sculpture Court and part of the 1997 exhibit *The Arts of South Asia*, which celebrated the 50th anniversary of the independence of India and Pakistan. Nothing, however, has quite matched the challenges of photographing the Buddhist cave art of Maharashtra, India. The extremes of light conditions—ranging from brilliant sunlight to the depths of black darkness within the cave—were problematic enough. Heat and the transportation even of simple equipment added to the stress. But the bat colonies, which had lived in the caves for centuries, were almost the final straw!



BRIAN BOYLE

Elizabeth Anne Knox

PREFERS ASPHALT TO THE RED CARPET



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EDITOR

Lee-Anne Jack

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Peter Enneson Design Inc.

CONSULTING EDITOR

Anna Kohn

COPY EDITOR

Andrea Gallagher Ellis

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Cathy Ayley

Mary Burridge

Glen Ellis

Mark Engstrom

Peter Kaelgren

Dave Rudkin

Kevin Seymour

Janet Waddington

Marianne Webb

ADVERTISING SALES

Colin Hennigar

416.586.5546

**EDITORIAL AND
MARKETING OFFICES**

ROM, the magazine of the Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2C6
Phone: 416.586.5585
E-mail: lee-anne@rom.on.ca
ROM Web site: www.rom.on.ca

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REVISING THE RECORD OF NATURE

We have an unusual inheritance at the ROM in two distinct ways. The Museum is among the world's few remaining "universal" museums of culture—open to collections from all cultures in all places at all times, reflecting a 19th-century ideal of the museum as a socially elevating encyclopedia. Many of the ROM's new galleries will illustrate this ideal. But the ROM is also a significant museum of natural history. In almost all other places, these two mandates were split apart.

That seemed sensible when "man" and "nature" were conceived as separate worlds. Today, the fortuitous union of these themes in one place at the ROM better reflects our understanding that humanity and nature are as one.

We are now at the stage in the 10-year trajectory of Renaissance ROM when the natural history mandate comes to the fore. It started in December 2007 with the opening of the James and Louise Temerty Galleries of the Age of Dinosaurs and the Gallery of the Age of Mammals. These enormously popular and beautiful places stake a renewed claim to the ROM's international role in understanding the environment.

But much more is soon to come. The greening of the ROM continues in 2008 with the building of "Liza's Garden" on the south roof of the Philosophers' Walk wing (named in honour of long-time ROM supporter Elizabeth Samuel).

Meanwhile, we begin working on the next two major permanent galleries of natural history.

Opening in December 2008, the

Teck Cominco Suite of Earth Sciences Galleries will include the Inco Limited Gallery of Minerals, a new Gold and Gem room, and the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame at the ROM. More than 2,000 superb mineral specimens will be on display, along with meteorites and cut stones.

One month later, we will unveil the Schad Gallery of Biodiversity: Life in Crisis. This gallery explores the strained web of life in the contemporary world, with hundreds of specimens and illustrative ecosystems, including a living coral reef. An open studio will host daily demonstrations and talks, including live animal demonstrations presented in partnership with the Earth Rangers organization. Weekly media updates on environmental news can be broadcast into and out of the ROM. The Schad Gallery sets the stage for a National Centre for Conservation and Biodiversity at the ROM – our new aspiration on completion of Renaissance ROM.

Yet to come are the Peter Bronfman Gallery of Early Life and, we hope, a new Gallery of Evolution and a Gallery of Whales.

"The Record of Nature Through Countless Ages," mandated in stone at the ROM's 1931 Weston Entrance, is emerging now with unprecedented vigour.

Where else in the world do treasured collections range from costume to fishes and ceramics to dinosaurs within the varied walls of one grand institution?

William Thorsell is director and CEO of the Royal Ontario Museum.

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THE BLU DIAMOND

— ONE-OF-A-KIND PENTHOUSE —

CRYSTALBLU

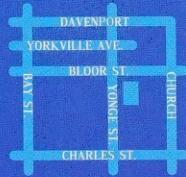
Condominiums at Bloor

Blue diamonds have long captivated the rich and the powerful. The famous "Hope Diamond", a 45.52 carat grey-blue beauty, was passed down through the ages by King Louis XIV of France. It now rests in the Smithsonian in Washington. Like the blue diamond, the Penthouse suite at Crystal Blu in the posh Bloor/Yorkville neighbourhood, is a rare treasure. Occupying the entire top floor, this magnificent 4000 sq. ft. space will be custom designed to your specifications by the building's architect. Polished to gleaming perfection with the grandest finishes in the world, The Blu Diamond Suite will be a testament to the best of living on the globe. A reflection of accomplishment. Stature. Individuality.

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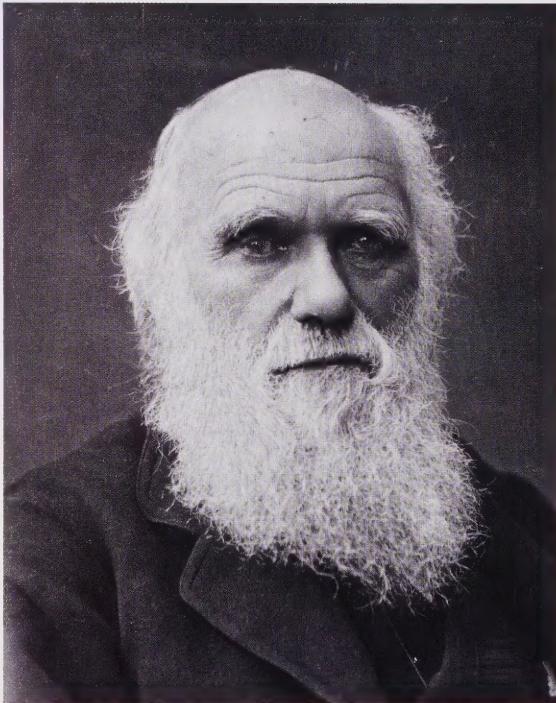
Presentation Centre Open
Mon-Sun 12-6pm Friday Closed
723 Yonge Street, just south of Bloor



DARWIN: THE EVOLUTION REVOLUTION

SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2008, TO MONDAY,
AUGUST 4, 2008

© FROM THE RICHARD MILNER ARCHIVE



LOAN COURTESY OF ENGLISH HERITAGE (DOWN HOUSE) © DENIS FINNIN, AMNH



Left: Portrait of Charles Darwin, c. 1878. Right: One of Darwin's original microscopes is just one of his many personal items on display in this elaborate reproduction of Darwin's study at Down House.

Charles Darwin's curiosity, observations, and discoveries nearly 150 years ago have forever changed our understanding of the origin and nature of all species, including our own. This wide-ranging exploration of Darwin's life and work is presented in the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal, the first Canadian venue to host the show during its international tour. It is the most in-depth exhibition ever assembled on the highly original thinker.

Darwin: The Evolution Revolution features the most complete collection of specimens, artifacts, manuscripts, and memorabilia related to Darwin (1809–1882), offering visitors a host of insightful perspectives on his extraordinary life and ideas. Renowned for his groundbreaking 1859 volume, *On the Origin of Species*, Darwin is also acclaimed for his work as a botanist, geologist, and naturalist. In showcasing the evidence that led him to re-

alize that all life has evolved according to natural laws, the exhibition illustrates not only the impact Darwin's work had on science and society in his own time but its continuing relevance in the 21st century.

Before Darwin formulated his thoughts on the subject, advanced thinkers of the 18th century had speculated about evolution but did not understand how it worked. Natural science was aligned with the biblical story of creation. While naturalists had amassed collections by 1800, classifying species was haphazard, with no concept that they were genealogically related. It was Darwin, through his detailed observations of nature, who proposed natural selection as the mechanism by which evolution worked.

"One exciting aspect of this exhibition is that it allows us to take the same voyage of discovery as Darwin," says Chris Darling, curator of the show during its ROM en-



of family, ill health, and insecurity."

Darwin called his five-year around-the-world voyage as ship naturalist the most pivotal event in his life. During that time he observed the patterns in nature that kindled his ideas about evolution. Visitors can see some of the wonders Darwin saw in South America and the Galapagos Islands, including live specimens of iguanas and frogs. And, for the first time, specimens collected by Darwin himself, including beetles, butterflies, moths, bugs, and fossils, are on display.

Knowing that his revolutionary ideas would shake British society to its core, Darwin kept his "Essay" secret for nearly two decades. Finally in 1859, when he published his pioneering tome, it became an instant bestseller.

The personal aspect of Darwin's life is also explored in the exhibition. Visitors can see some of his personal possessions, such as his pistol and his Bible. A video shot at Darwin's beloved Down House is narrated by Randal Keynes, Darwin's great-great-grandson, who in another au-

dition installation reads a selection from Darwin's writings and letters.

Over time, science has overwhelmingly supported Darwin's ideas. In another video, contemporary scientists and theologians discuss the importance of Darwin's discoveries.

Throughout his life Darwin was a passionate explorer of the world around him and he found in nature awe and wonder—as well as the evidence for his theories. "There is a grandeur in this view of life," he wrote, ". . . endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been and are being evolved."

Come see for yourself how that grand view evolved in the mind of this pioneering thinker.

Darwin: The Evolution Revolution is mounted in cooperation with English Heritage,



the organization that administers Down House, Darwin's home; the Natural History Museum, London; Cambridge University, one of the primary repositories of Darwin's writings; and some of Darwin's living descendants.

Organized by the American Museum of Natural History, New York, in collaboration with the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto; the Museum of Science, Boston; The Field Museum, Chicago; and the Natural History Museum, London.



BEYOND THE EXHIBITION

■ Family Activity Area

Hands-on activities, offered in three distinct areas—The Ship, The Island, and The Study—are supervised by ROM facilitators and range from knotting aboard the *HMS Beagle* to bug sorting in Darwin's study. Touchable real specimens, realistic film projections, and exciting wearable costumes enhance the *Darwin* experience.

■ Shop

A special shop offers Darwin-inspired merchandise.

■ Guided Tours

Docents offer guided tours of *Darwin: The Evolution Revolution* at regularly scheduled times throughout its engagement.

PATRICIA HARRIS GALLERY

OPENS ON APRIL 5, 2008 THIS EXCEPTIONAL COLLECTION

Dating from the 1st millennium BCE to the 21st century CE, the ROM's renowned collection of more than 50,000 textile and costume artifacts includes outstanding examples of Chinese imperial costume, late Antique and early Islamic textiles from Egypt, Western fashion from the Baroque period to the present day, and early Canadian coverlets. Approximately 200 pieces drawn from the collection to illustrate the extensive transformations in textile design and technology throughout the past three millennia are highlighted in the new Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles & Costume.

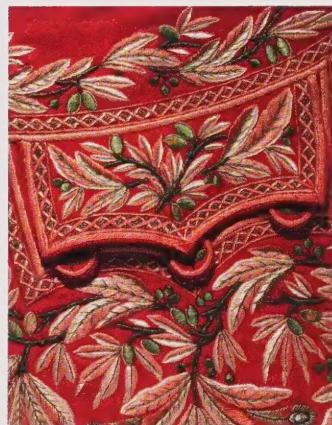
Named in honour of Mrs. Patricia Harris, the fourth-floor gallery is one of the most dramatic in the newly opened Michael Lee-Chin Crystal. Says Mrs. Harris of the voluminous cathedral-like space, "This gallery is the realization of a surprise 1999 Christmas gift given to me by my husband, Jim, and it is an inspired setting for the ROM's celebrated collection of textiles and costume." The opening of the gallery along with the Shreyas and Mina Ajmera Gallery of Africa, the Americas, and Asia-Pacific marks the completion of the

permanent galleries in the Lee-Chin Crystal.

The Jennifer Ivey Bannock In Focus Exhibit at the entrance to the Harris Gallery is a frequently changing display that will highlight exciting new acquisitions, interesting curatorial research, or textile-related topics in the news. The first display examines the history of a gold and silver overdress that has travelled since 1801 from Egypt to England and Newfoundland before joining the ROM's collections in 2001.

Highlights of the ROM's printed tex-

908.7.9 / BRIAN BOYCE, ROM



Left: Laurel leaves embroidered in silk on wool. Detail of a man's civil uniform coat.

Italy, 1805–1806. Middle: Boy's coat. Silk brocaded lampas with silver filé. Italy. Textile: Late Bizarre style,



984.81.2



923.4.73

1715–1720. Coat: 1730–1750.

Right: Decorative pillow cover called a *bere*. Linen tabby, blackwork in silk floss, silver gilt filé, and spangles. England. 1550–1600.

OF TEXTILES & COSTUME

GETS A PERMANENT HOME AT THE ROM

FROM THE CURATOR'S PERSPECTIVE

European figured silks in the Baroque style of the 17th and early 18th centuries were characterized by exuberant grandeur, contrasts of light against dark, mass against void, and the use of strong diagonals and curves to give a sense of movement. The Baroque style originated in Italy, but Louis XIV was so successful in making his court the arbiter of European fashion, that France took the lead from Italy in matters of art and style from the late 17th century onwards.

This quintessential Baroque textile has opulent gold motifs on a rich dark brown ground. Two types of metal thread (one a smooth thread composed of a strip of metal wound around a silk core, the other a crin-

BRIAN BOYLE, ROM / 979.141.11. © GIFT OF MR. AND MRS. W. K. NEWCOMB



Length of French brocaded silk damask,
c. 1695–1710.

kled thread composed of a strip of metal wound around a super-twisted silk core) produce a relief effect, which is heightened by the damask

sub-pattern. Exotic flowers and fruits are asymmetrically arranged in a rolling, tossing composition typical of the Baroque.

The pattern shows a degree of fantasy that has earned this group of textiles the nickname "Bizarre Silks." Admiration for Indian chintz and oriental silks imported by East India companies throughout the 17th century liberated European textile designers from established conventions, inspiring them to devise patterns even more exotic and bizarre. In this case, the pattern is so fantastic as to be virtually indescribable: combinations of what appear to be giant seed-pods, flowers, fruit, and leaves set on fanciful bases.

— Anu

tile and costume collection, featured in the Lynda Hamilton Printing Exhibit, illustrate how paint, ink, and dye are used in the decoration of textiles.

The Flavia Redelmeier Handweaving in Canada and the World Exhibit explores this ancient technology and illustrates the evolution of weaving techniques through different looms and their related textiles.

The Phyllis Hamilton Needlework Exhibit presents textiles, costume, and accessories from around the world that have been created or embellished with needle and thread.

Other features of the gallery include displays of Chinese textiles and costumes, the art of tailoring from the 18th century to the present day, and modern deconstructions of classic forms.

Among the ROM's oldest surviving textiles are archaeo-

logical pieces from Pre-Columbian Peru and Late Antique, Early Byzantine, and Early Islamic Egypt. One highlight is a magnificent Paracas mantle with embroidered motifs dating to the period 200 BCE–200 CE.

Throughout history in many parts of the world, luxury silk textile designs have been influenced by local taste and fashion. Examples of high-end luxury textiles from 15th- to 18th-century Europe illustrate the evolution of design and technique at its apogee.

Take a tour through history via these gorgeous textiles and costumes in their spacious new home.

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SHREYAS AND MINA AJM AFRICA, THE AMERICAS A

OPENING APRIL 5, 2008

9153.265 / BRIAN BOYLE, ROM



Above left: Asia-Pacific. Headdress with carnelian beads, late 19th century. Made by the Plains Aboriginal people of Taiwan. Above right: Africa. Male twin figures, ere ibeji art form, of wood and metal, 19th to 20th century. Made by the Yoruba peoples of Nigeria. Facing page left: Oceania.

For the first time in more than 30 years, the ROM has a permanent space in which to showcase its vast and diverse collections from Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Central and South America. Many of the approximately 1,400 artifacts representing the artistic and cultural traditions of indigenous peoples from these regions are on display for the first time.

Named in honour of Shreyas and Mina Ajmera, in appreciation of their generous support of Renaissance ROM, the new gallery is home to artifacts spanning nearly 2,000 years, each revealing an aspect of everyday life, clothing, commerce, art, or ceremonial ritual of indigenous cultures. Rich with symbols of heritage and identity that continue to have meaning today, the exhibits range from large and dramatic ceremonial masks and colourful robes to archaeological objects. The collections were gathered between the late 19th century and the present, and include some of the Museum's first acquisitions.

"The opening of this new gallery has enabled us to bring back collections that have been in storage since the 1970s," said Trudy Nicks, senior curator of Anthropology

998.30.12-13



in the ROM's World Cultures Department and the coordinating curator for the gallery. "Creating the new gallery has been—and continues to be—a catalyst for developing creative and mutually beneficial relationships with the communities represented."

The gallery is divided into four geographical areas: Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, and Oceania.

A range of African objects explores creative traditions, representations of power, everyday life and architecture, spiritual life, and the ideas of community that connect the various regions of the continent. Carved stools, masks, headdresses, clothing, tapestry, weapons, crowns, and hats are some of the items that offer glimpses into the meanings of historical traditions. A section on beadwork by the Ndebele people of South Africa shows traditional works that emphasize the life stages of men and women as well as contemporary pieces created using traditional skills.

The cultural diversity of peoples from the northwest U.S. seaboard to the tip of South America is explored in the Americas section. Archaeological and ethnographic

ERA GALLERY OF ASIA-PACIFIC



969.330.172

968.322.23



Pot made of clay, late 20th century. From the village of Aibom, East Sepik, Papua New Guinea. Right: Americas. Ceremonial headdress worn by boys and men of the Kayapó culture, parrot and macaw feathers and palm strips, c. 1966. From Pororí, Xingu National Park, Mato Grosso, Brazil.

artifacts ranging in age from ancient Nasca material from about 300 CE to 20th-century objects illustrate the fusion of ancient Indian traditions and colonial influences. The Scotiabank Group Exhibit of Mexico & Central America features elaborate costumes, while beautiful ceramics from the Andes, spectacular feathered regalia from the Kayapó of the Brazilian rainforest, and a rare collection of early 20th-century objects from the Mapuche of southern Chile are on display in the Scotiabank Group Exhibit of South America.

The Asia-Pacific section is based largely on three important collections assembled between 1888 and 1904—one, representing the Ainu people of Japan, features beautiful robes; the second, acquired from exhibits at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, features lifestyles of Filipinos from the islands of Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindinao dating from the 19th century; the third comprises material culture from two indigenous groups of northern Taiwan—the Tayal, who were headhunters at the time, and the Plains Aboriginal people, whose clothing and marriage customs reflect Chinese influence. The Taiwan collection, which was brought to Toronto

by Dr. George Leslie MacKay in 1894, contains some of the oldest surviving material of these cultures.

Oceania embraces some of the most linguistically and culturally diverse regions of the world. Waves of migration beginning more than 50,000 years ago populated Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. Objects in this section explore ceremony, conflict, trade and exchange, and celebrating life's transitions. Visitors will learn about the Kula Ring, a ceremonial exchange network in Papua New Guinea. They will see elaborate wood carvings made by the Maori of New Zealand, and contemporary bark paintings by Australian Aborigines, who represent the world's oldest continuing civilization and whose religious traditions span more than 80,000 years.

Come explore this exotic region of the world and see magnificent objects in their spectacular new home. To read further about a selection of objects from the show, see *From the Collections*, page 22.

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OUT FROM UNDER: DISABILITY, HISTORY, AND THINGS TO REMEMBER

APRIL TO JUNE 2008

PHOTOGRAPH PATRICIA SEELEY / OBJECT LENDER: JOAN MACTAVISH



Braille watch, c. 1970, worn by Mae Brown, the first deaf-blind Canadian to earn a university degree. From the installation "Trailblazing" by Kim Wrigley-Archer. The glass flips up to allow access to the watch face.

Sixteen grey sweat suits. A baby's bassinette. A workplace bulletin board. A circus program. Familiar, everyday things. What makes them remarkable?

"Their hidden histories," say Melanie Panitch, Kathryn Church, and Catherine Frazee, curators of the exhibit *Out from Under: Disability, History, and Things to Remember*, which opens at the ROM in April. Unique and provocative, the show presents a compelling snapshot of the history of disabled people in Canada. The collection of work—produced by students, collaborators, and faculty at Ryerson University's School of Disability Studies—documents struggles for social and political recognition, for survival and remembrance, for identity and pride.

Breaking from conventional methods of historical research, the curators have avoided chronicles of grand events, pursuing instead the stories evoked by everyday objects. Facts and lessons come to life in the narration of objects ranging from shovels to storage trunks, from IQ testing kits to iron lung components, from educational posters to protest placards.

Ultimately, stories of shame, neglect, and disenfranchisement illuminate a proud history of resistance and survival. Taken together, the 13 installations are a tribute to the resilience, creativity, and civic and cultural contributions of disabled Canadians. Don't miss this exhibit that will both honour and make history.

CONTINUING EXHIBITIONS

Glass Worlds: Paperweights from the ROM's Collections

■ Nearly 100 19th- and 20th-century glass paperweights have been assembled for this intimate exhibition, the first major show of its kind in Canada.

Samuel European Galleries, Exhibition Space • Until Winter 2008

Trade Winds: Chinese Export Wares from the 8th to 20th Centuries

■ This small jewel box of an exhibition features some of the most popular export items China produced during the 1,200 years from

the Tang dynasty to modern times—ceramics, watercolours, textiles, lacquerware, and silverware. It also explores China's long trading history and its influence on Chinese wares.

Herman Herzog Levy Gallery, Main Floor
• Until April 6, 2008 • Exhibit sponsor:
Manulife Financial

Decorative Arts in the Art Deco Style from the Collection of Bernard and Sylvia Ostry

■ Noted Canadian collectors Sylvia Ostry and the late Bernard Ostry generously donated a significant collection of Art Deco furni-

ture, lamps, and sculptures to the ROM.

Samuel European Galleries, Third Floor •
Indefinite run

Glimpses of Byzantium

■ More than 80 artifacts dating from the 6th to 7th centuries are drawn from the ROM's fine Byzantine collection, the most important in Canada.

Third Floor • Until December 2008

Early Typewriters

■ More than 25 typewriters from the beginning of the machine's history are on display. Second Floor • Until June 29, 2008

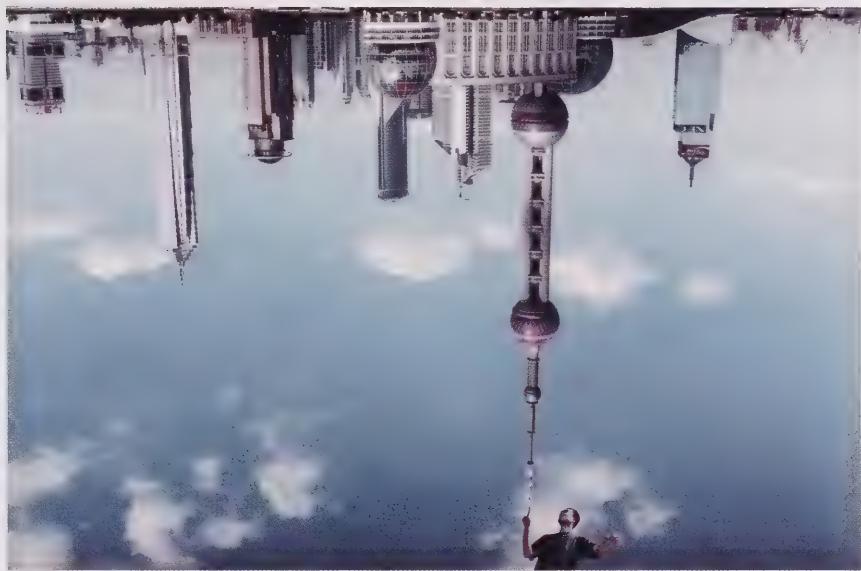
For exhibition details, go to the ROM's Web site at www.rom.on.ca

SHANGHAI KALEIDOSCOPE

SUNDAY, MAY 4, 2008,

TO SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2008

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND SHANGHAI GALLERY



Light and Easy II (2002), by Yang Zhenzhong. Single-channel video, sound.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND THE HAUDENSCHILD COLLECTION

Organized by the ROM's Institute for Contemporary Culture and guest-curated by Christopher Phillips of New York's International Center for Photography, *Shanghai Kaleidoscope* offers an unprecedented view of one of the world's most dynamic cities. The show, presented by Manulife Financial, highlights an emerg-



Gravity: Shanghai Night Sky (2004), by Shi Yong. 56 lightbox-mounted photographic transparencies.

ing generation of Chinese artists, architects, and fashion designers.

Working with the ICC, Christopher

Phillips has created the world's first exhibition that examines Shanghai's fascinating and rapid reconfiguration as a 21st century city. Through an adventurous mix of video installations, photo works, designer fashions, runway videos, and films by Shanghai's leading contemporary artists and designers, the exhibition provides an insider's view of the city's high-speed, high-density, high-rise culture.

Many of the exhibition's works, ranging from realistic imagery to more experimental pieces, juxtapose historic Shanghai with the emergence of the modern city, illustrating the changes made to Shanghai's urban fabric and commenting on the impact this new city has on its inhabitants.

Come explore this exciting Chinese metropolis through the eyes of its artists, fashion designers, and filmmakers.

Program Collaborator: Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto

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BEYOND THE EXHIBITION

■ Historical

Photographs

From April 26 to October 26, the ROM presents a selection of 80 historical photographs of Shanghai in the Herman Herzog Levy Gallery.

■ Tours

ROM Museum Guides offer tours throughout the exhibition. In May, tours of the East Asian galleries will be available in Cantonese and Mandarin. Call 416.586.5889 to reserve.

■ Catalogue

Created with the generous support of Interbrand Canada.

■ Imperial Ball

On Saturday, May 3, 2008, the ROM celebrates the opening of *Shanghai Kaleidoscope* with the 2008 Imperial Ball. For more information, go to www.cccgt.org.

■ China Month

Chinesethemed lectures, films, and musical performances are offered on Sundays throughout the month of May. On May 4, 2008, at 2 pm, the ROM and WNED-PBS TV present the 1934 Chinese silent film *The Goddess*, followed by a lecture by Rich Meyer on the Shanghai film industry. For more information go to www.rom.on.ca in early spring.



SHEILA FARRAGHAR, ROM

Visitors take in the sights in the new Temerty Dinosaur Gallery.

If you were anywhere near Bloor and Avenue Road during the holiday season you couldn't miss the lineups to get into the ROM—they stretched down the street and around the corner. A record number of visitors—more than 66,000—came to see the ROM and its soaring new dinosaur and mammal galleries. ROM Membership is also at a record high of 32,000 households.

Critical reviews of the new galleries have been positive. The *Toronto Star* raved that “Daniel Libeskind’s Crystal gives [the ROM’s dinosaur specimens] their dream home: a whirling, curving, light-filled space that’s part Jurassic Park and part luxury condo.” And the *Globe and Mail* assures us that “the new displays should also appeal to some of the ROM’s most discerning and knowledgeable dinosaur fans: children.”

Bring yours to see this popular new gallery.

ART FOR BLOOR STREET: COLLAGES BY NAOKO MATSUBARA

The ROM has unveiled a new addition to its Bloor Street Plaza. Called *Art for Bloor Street: Three Collages by Naoko Matsubara*

Matsubara, the three colourful large-scale works were created specifically for the window of the ROM’s Philosophers’ Walk building. The first of Japanese-Canadian artist Naoko Matsubara’s collages to be placed in the window, which will be visible from the outside only, is *Emerald Summer* (2006), generously donated by the artist. It was produced to accompany two sister works commissioned by the ROM, *Gateway to the East* (2006) and *Setting Sail* (2006), which are on display, along with three preparatory de-

SHEILA FARRAGHAR, ROM



Artist Naoko Matsubara (left) with Japan’s Consul General Koichi Kawakami in front of her work.

signs, inside the Museum in the Prince Takamado Gallery of Japan. Each work will take its turn in the window until May 2008.

An internationally exhibited printmaker, Matsubara made a magnanimous gift to the ROM in 1998 of 177 woodcuts from her early work.

NEW ROM FAMILY WEEKENDS

Every Saturday and Sunday, the ROM is offering a roster of Family Weekend programming free with admission. The wide array of energy-filled and educational programs geared to the whole family will include live performances, guided tours, storytelling, and much more.

“Busy families can spend a Saturday or Sunday together exploring the ROM’s galleries and participating in fun educational programming at a time that is convenient,” says ROM director and CEO William Thorsell.

Musicians, including some of the best and brightest talent from across Canada, perform every weekend. Solo artists serenade guests in a variety of world musical styles as they stroll through the Museum, and every Sunday at 2 pm visitors can relax in Canada Court and listen to live classical or world music.

Kids can learn about different cultures in a fun way as knights, samurai warriors, and other exhibit-based characters draped in authentic garb greet them at the Museum’s main entrance. The characters engage young visitors with insightful and intriguing facts about the exhibits. Special family-oriented whirlwind tours of the ROM’s galleries take place at 1 pm, 2 pm, and 3 pm, led by the Crystal Piper.

For up-to-date information about

ROM Family Weekends, visit:
http://rom.on.ca/programs/family_weekends.

CANADIAN DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT HORSESHOE CRAB FOSSILS

Few modern animals are as deserving of the title “living fossil” as the lowly horseshoe crab. Seemingly unchanged since before the Age of Dinosaurs, these venerable sea creatures can now claim a history that reaches back almost half a billion years. In a collaborative research article published in January in the prestigious British journal *Palaeontology*, a ROM-led team of Canadian scientists revealed rare new horseshoe crab fossils they had discovered in 445 million year old rocks—about 120 million years older than any previously known forms.

ROM paleontologist Dave Rudkin with colleagues Dr. Graham Young of



Nearly complete specimen of *Lunataspis aurora* (left, about 25 mm wide) beside dried carapace of a young Atlantic horseshoe crab *Limulus polyphemus*.

The Manitoba Museum and Dr. Godfrey Nowlan of the Geological Survey of Canada (Calgary) named their remarkable new fossils *Lunataspis aurora*, meaning “crescent moon shield of the dawn” in reference to their shape, geological age, and northerly discovery sites in Manitoba. Although they are more primitive in several aspects than known horseshoe crabs, their resemblance to living forms is unmistakable.

CURATOR'S CORNER

Free lecture series for Members 55+.

All lectures take place in the Signy and Cléophée Eaton Theatre.

Charles Darwin and the Nature of the Naturalist

Wednesday, March 26, 2008
11 am to Noon

Darwin's approach to science was to observe animals and plants carefully in nature and then to formulate reasonable explanations and testable hypotheses. His work exemplified 19th-century natural history with voyages of discovery, specimen collection and description, and attempts to organize the burgeoning number of species into a coherent system. These traditions are alive and well today in natural history museums. And it is these traditions—answering the questions What is it? Where does it live? How is it related to other species?—that ideally position museums and curators to provide the information required to address the ongoing global loss of species.

Speaker: Christopher Darling, senior curator of insects, ROM's Department of Natural History

Stone Silver and Gold: Recent Acquisitions

Wednesday, April 30, 2008
11 am to Noon

At the end of 2006, the ROM's South Asia collection reached a milestone by passing \$1 million in new acquisitions thanks to the Louise Hawley Stone Charitable Trust. Curator Dr. Deepali Dewan shares stories of this journey—the search, the find, the capture, and

BRIAN BOYLE, ROM / 2006.94.3.1-3. ACQUIRED WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE LOUISE HAWLEY STONE CHARITABLE TRUST



the ones that got away. You will see highlights of the acquired objects and the thought process leading up to their becoming part of the Museum's collection.

Speaker: Dr. Deepali Dewan, curator, South Asian Art, ROM's Department of World Cultures

Sunset on the Volga

Wednesday, May 28, 2008
11 am to Noon

The majestic sweep of the Volga River from Moscow to St. Petersburg offers scenes of water, forest, and sky of unsurpassed beauty. To travel this route is to see the glories of Russian landscape painting—from Moscow's Tretyakov Gallery and the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg—brought to life before the traveller's eyes. The natural splendour of the Volga and its surroundings evokes the soul and spirit of eternal Russia. This talk is illustrated with landscape photographs taken by K. Corey Keeble during his cruises on the Volga River in 1997, 2001, and 2003.

Speaker: K. Corey Keeble, curator, European Decorative Arts, ROM's Department of Western Art and Culture

FEED YOUR MIND WITH ROMLIFE PROGRAMS

MIDNIGHT AT THE OASIS

BRIAN BOYLE, ROM



From *The Sheik* to *Laurel and Hardy*, the movies have made us dream of oases—places where beleaguered travellers can find water, trees, and flowers in the desert, where camels graze and raiders lurk over the next sand dune. Ah, Hollywood! In Egypt, there is a series of real oases in the Western Desert, but they are not the perfect paradises we might imagine. They form part of the country's Wild West—a place seldom visited.

The reality of oasis life in ancient times is just now coming into focus. Dr. Zahi Hawass, secretary general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities of Egypt, has found the Valley of

Golden Mummies in the Bahariya Oasis. And at the Dakhleh Oasis, Canadian doctors and archaeologists have traced patterns of health and disease over hundreds of years.

In a new ROMLife course taught by ROM teacher and Egyptologist Gayle Gibson, you'll investigate the latest archaeological discoveries and medical reports from the Dakhleh Oasis as well as the surprising stories that a plain white coffin can tell. You'll come to understand the important roles oases have played in Egypt's history, economy, and culture. Gayle's four-week course *Midnight at the Oasis: The Other Egypt* begins April 22.

For more than 90 years, the ROM has been offering courses, special events, and lectures by dedicated instructors like Gayle Gibson to Museum Members and the public. ROMLife offers a wide variety of lectures and courses that inform, entertain, and let you explore the worlds of nature and culture. Available in the afternoon or evening, weekday or weekend. Instructors are ROM curators, teachers, and carefully selected international experts.



DON'T MISS OUT!

**Registration
has begun.**

To see the full spring lineup of lectures, courses, and special events, go to www.rom.on.ca/ programs or call 416.586.5871 for your free copy of the ROMLife programs guide.



ANIMALS ON A MISSION

Are your little ones longing to see live animals? Now they can, thanks to the Earth Rangers, who will conduct four live animal shows daily at the ROM's 2008 March Break, March 8 to 16.

Begun by renowned wildlife activist Jane Goodall, the Earth Rangers serve as role models for responsible treatment of the environment. Their fun approach? Using animal ambassadors, such as Pouncer the barn owl. Children can observe the animals and learn about their unique adaptations, threats to their survival, and simple actions they can take to help protect the natural world. Between performances kids can meet and greet the stars of the show.

"Our Animal Adventure Show is a great way to launch our partnership with the ROM," says Katie Altoft, director of School Programs, Earth Rangers. "It will allow us to engage the Museum audience and learn more about them as we prepare to open the Earth Rangers Studio in 2009 as part of the ROM's Schad Gallery of Biodiversity: Life in Crisis."

Paint a masterpiece. Build an empire. Explore the world.

ROMkids



Summer Club

One of the city's most creative and diverse summer camps, offering an exciting array of fun, activity-based programs. From archaeology to zoology, programs are sure to match any child's interests and abilities! Summer Club 2008 features course favourites Dino Hunters, Clay Days, Egyptomania, Starquest and more!

Generously supported by:  Imperial Oil Foundation 

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The ROM is an agency of the Government of Ontario

Saturday Morning Club

Fall • Winter • Spring

Enjoy eight Saturdays of fun-filled educational adventures in the ROM's fascinating galleries and labs. Perfect for the curious and creative child!



ROM Explorers' Club



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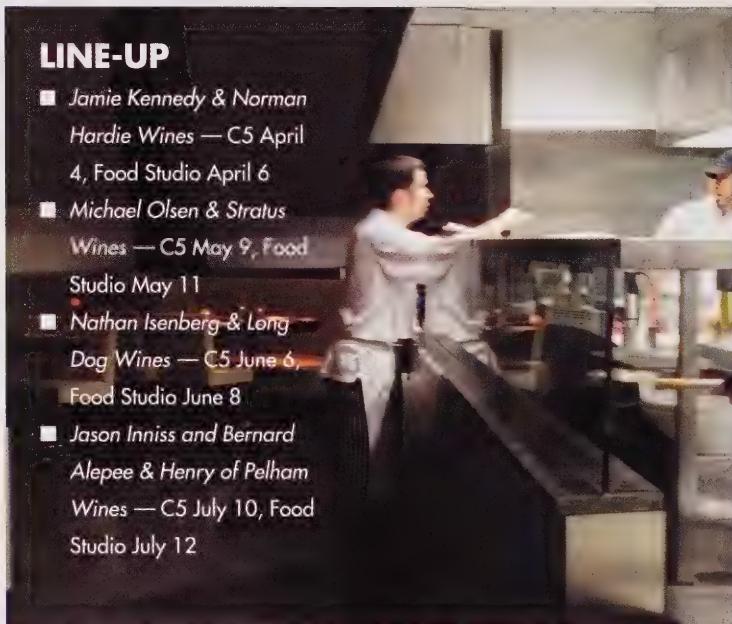
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GREEN CUISINE CELEBRITY GUEST

CHEFS SPICE UP THE ROM'S RESTAURANTS WITH THEIR TAKE ON SLOW FOOD.



LINE-UP

- Jamie Kennedy & Norman
Hardie Wines — C5 April 4, Food Studio April 6
- Michael Olsen & Stratus
Wines — C5 May 9, Food Studio May 11
- Nathan Isenberg & Long
Dog Wines — C5 June 6, Food Studio June 8
- Jason Inniss and Bernard Alepée & Henry of Pelham Wines — C5 July 10, Food Studio July 12

Charles Darwin would have approved of C5 chef Ted Corrado's approach to cooking. Corrado's "Toronto cuisine" is only natural—it focuses on fresh in-season ingredients sourced from the most local producers and purveyors.

Now C5 and Food Studio are exploring that slow food philosophy with a special gastronomic series featuring celebrity chefs such as Jamie Kennedy.

Once a month on a Friday evening, C5 will host one of four Ontario-based guest chefs—along with a selected local farmer and vintner—who will offer up a food and wine menu using local ingredients. They will discuss their philosophies of sustainable and artisanal food and wine production.

"Terroir—the specific qualities that the soil in a region imparts on the taste of the food produced there—is one theme the chefs will discuss," says Liz Hollyer, director of Restaurant Associates, the firm that runs the ROM's restaurants.

On Sunday afternoons, a family-friendly version of the program will take place in Food Studio. The selected chef, farmer, and winemaker will be on hand to explain how gastronomy works. Says Hollyer: "It's a great family activity that allows children to ask questions about the process involved in taking an ingredient from farm field to dinner plate."

For reservations, call

416.416.586.7928.

Members call 416.586.8095.

TEA FOR TWO Afternoon tea will be offered in the C5 lounge on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday afternoons during the Wedgwood exhibition opening at the ROM June 7. For details go to www.rom.on.ca.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Royal Ontario Museum

100 Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2C6
Web site: www.rom.on.ca
E-mail: info@rom.on.ca

HOURS

- Saturday through Thursday 10 am to 6 pm
- Friday 10 am to 9:30 pm
- Closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day

ADMISSION PRICES

- ROM Members FREE
- Adults \$20
- Students and Seniors (with ID) \$17
- Children (5 to 14) \$14
- Infants 4 and under free
- On Friday after 4:30 pm, general admission is half price.
- Admission, except for ticketed exhibitions, is free for the last 45 minutes daily.
- Museum and Arts Pass Program participant.

MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP

- Individual \$90
- Family/Dual \$119
- Non-resident \$95
- Student \$50
- Explorers \$15 (in addition to ROM membership)
- Curators' Circle \$175
- Museum Circle \$300
- Director's Circle \$600
- Young Patrons' Circle Single \$600 / Dual \$1000
- Royal Patrons' Circle \$1500+

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- General Information 416.586.5549
- Recorded Information in English and French 416.586.8000
- TDD (Telephone Device for the Deaf) 416.586.5550
- School Groups: Contact the Education Department 416.586.5801
- Museum Volunteers 416.586.5513
- ROM Museum Store 416.586.5766
- C5 Members Reservation Line 416.586.8095
- Membership Services 416.586.5700 or membership@rom.on.ca
- ROM Governors 416.586.5660
- Donations 416.586.5660
- Renaissance ROM 416.586.8003



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SHOPPING THE WORLD HOW THE ROM'S MUSEUM STORE FINDS THE EXTRAORDINARY

“It’s about bringing the past into the present in a way that all can appreciate,” says Herman.

Finding extraordinary pieces that fit the bill isn’t easy. Herman works with the extensive vendor connections she has cultivated through travel, trade shows, and networking. But each show has its own demands, and she must go beyond the established channels. “You have to open every door to get that unique product. It involves a lot of travel, scouring the world to find the right things.”

For the upcoming show on ancient Trypillian culture from the Ukraine, Herman will be reaching out to artists directly.

“There are beautiful contemporary versions of Trypillian objects created by Ukrainian artists every day. I’ll be calling on contemporary Ukrainian artists around the world to get those extraordinary items you will see in the ROM’s Museum Store.”

BRIAN BOYLE, ROM

With every special exhibition, the ROM’s Museum Store offers a reflection of the show in a thoughtful array of unique objects. For Nancy Herman, the ROM’s general manager of merchandising and retail operations, obtaining this mix of products all begins with research of the show’s subject matter. “People come to the exhibition because they connect with and are intrigued by the subject,” she notes. “We want to capture that memory for them in the merchandise we offer and give them something meaningful.”

For *Darwin: The Evolution Revolution* the shop is offering an exotic

and intriguing range of merchandise for the family, home, and personal adornment, many of which have been made with the current world concern with keeping the planet healthy in

mind. “It’s astonishing that one man’s thought process could have such

impact and continue to have such relevance today,” Herman points out. To reflect that message, the items she has selected are natural history-oriented with a

Darwin flavour, products that also fit with our ideas of contemporary lifestyle. A range of Darwin-inspired stationery and contemporary home décor items are available as well as jewellery made of natural exotic shell, stone, and fossil sourced from around the world. Shoppers can recapture Darwin’s love of nature with representations of animals,

insects, rocks, and fossils. “It’s about bringing



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FROM THE

Africa, the Americas, and Asia-Pacific

From the masks used in ritual masquerades to practical tote gear, historical objects from the vast region represented in the new Shreyas and Mina Ajmera Gallery of Africa, the Americas, and Asia-Pacific have intriguing stories to tell.

Moche Ceramic Vessel



A thousand years before the Incas, the Moche Culture flourished on the north coast of Peru from 100 to 700 CE. Though the Moche had no writing system, the pottery they left behind offers a vibrant window into their activities and beliefs. They are famed for their fineline vessels with intricate scenes that wrap around the vessel body. The one pictured here dating to the Moche IV period (thought to be c. 400 – 600 CE) depicts “ritual running,” a scene common in the later phases of Moche culture. The runners, a mixture of anthropomorphized birds and felines, are shown holding bags in their hands as they sprint up the vessel from left to right. Some archaeologists think the runners are messengers carrying inscribed lima beans in their bags. The lima bean is one of the predominant plants found in Moche art—there are even scenes of anthropomorphized bean warriors—and a few of the beans are depicted at the base of this vessel. On Peru’s dry north coast, there is a general concern with the earth’s fecundity, and some scholars think the beans may represent abundance. Others have suggested that the inscribed beans may have been used as a system of proto-writing, but these ideas have yet to be substantiated.

—Justin Jennings

BRIAN BOYLE, ROM / 930.32.5

Gelede Masks

Once a year when the first rain falls, or in times of communal distress, the Yoruba people of southwestern Nigeria put on colourful displays called gelede spectacles. These masquerades represent a visible, artistic expression of Yoruba belief in the extraordinary power of women. Referred to as “our mothers,” women are thought to hold powers that can be beneficent or destructive: they can bring health,



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COLLECTIONS



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wealth, and fertility to the land and its people, or they can bring disaster.

The creative costumes worn during these performances, such as these two masks, refer to various aspects of the social world and promote harmony by subjecting anti-social behaviours to public ridicule. While always danced by men, gelede masquerades represent both male and female principles. Specific gender attributes may be depicted in the headdress or emphasized in other elements of the costume. Traditionally, performers dance in identical pairs to amplify the aesthetic and sensory power of the spectacle.

— Silvia Forni

Backpack with Rain shield

Backpacks were used by the Igorot peoples of Luzon, an island in the northern Philippines. Woven from bamboo and rattan, the packs had an attached rain shield, covered with layers of fibre from palm leaf stalks, which kept both the wearer and the contents of the backpack dry. The backpacks were used on trips to places beyond the home village. Hunters used them to carry provisions on the outbound journey and, if their hunt was successful, to carry meat back to the village.

This one is from the Bontoc group of Igorot peoples. Acquired recently by the ROM, it is one of many items that once formed the large Philippines display at the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904.

— Trudy Nicks



910.57.319



The six pictured artifacts are a small sample of the 1,400 objects in the new gallery. The Moche people

Toluk (Women's Money)

On Babedaop Island in the Republic of Palau, toluk, or “women’s money,” is exchanged between women to mark significant moments in their lives. Made from individual plates of hawksbill sea turtle shells that are heated in water, molded into bowls, and polished to highlight the shell’s natural patterns, toluk are carved with minimal decoration around the rim. It is thought that these carvings may represent the wings of a frigate bird in flight.

Toluk is highly prestigious, and one of the main circumstances in which it is given is to pay for food preparation services associated with any of the traditional ceremonies that mark life stages. It is given to women by their husband’s clan.

This traditional tale tells of the origin of toluk: A turtle named Medatumloket was trapped one day and taken to a village to be cooked and served at a feast. The eyes of the woman cooking the turtle began watering from the smoke. When the turtle asked why she was crying she said it was because she felt sorry for him. Medatumloket warned her not to eat him, but to take his shell instead. When the other villagers ate the turtle’s meat their stomachs swelled and they died. But the woman who took his shell went to an-

96271 16



other village where her children became chiefs. The shell was the first toluk, or Palauan women’s money.

Because sea turtle populations are now declining as a result of commercial fishing activities and destruction of egg nests, toluk, too, are becoming rare.

— Adapted from text by Dr. Lorne Holyoak



Bolivian Mask

The Diablada, or devil dance mask, originated in Oruro, a community at the foot of a mountain rich in minerals high in the Andean plateau of Bolivia. In ancient times the locals gave offerings to the underworld spirit, Supay, now called *el tío*, in exchange for mining into his domain.

After the Spanish arrived in the 16th century, in order to inculcate Christian beliefs they attempted to persuade the locals that Supay was the devil. In 1789, around the time of the annual Carnival, which coincided with the Catholic feast day of the Virgin of Candlemas, the Virgin’s image miraculously appeared in a mineshaft. The renamed “Virgin of the Mineshaft” became the focus of future Carnivals. It is said that from that time the miners also began to dress as Supay in the guise of the Christian devil so as not to exclude their traditional deity from the celebrations. Accordingly, the mask is characterized by a horned human-like head. Frogs, snakes, and lizards often ornament the mask, representing plagues unleashed by the ancient demi-god Huari since, according to some, the goddess Nustra who destroyed the plagues was reincarnated as the Virgin of the Mineshaft.

The ROM’s Diablada mask was collected in Oruro by Mr. D.A. Sturgess in 1956. Its features are worked in paper or cloth dipped in wet plaster and detailed with cut mirrors with light bulbs for eyes.

— Arni Brownstone

975.142 GIFT OF MR. W. A. STURGES

from Peru who produced the ceramic vessel are known only through archaeological evidence. But the peoples who produced the other pieces represent cultures that continue today.

Australian Bark Painting



Traditional Australian bark paintings were created by the native Yolngu people for ceremonial purposes. Panels of bark cut from a stringybark tree were heated over a fire, then flattened and dried before being painted with colour: ochres (red and yellow), river-bed clay or plant pigment (white) and, where available, manganese (black). The paint was applied with brushes twisted from plant fibres. Tree sap was used as a fixative.

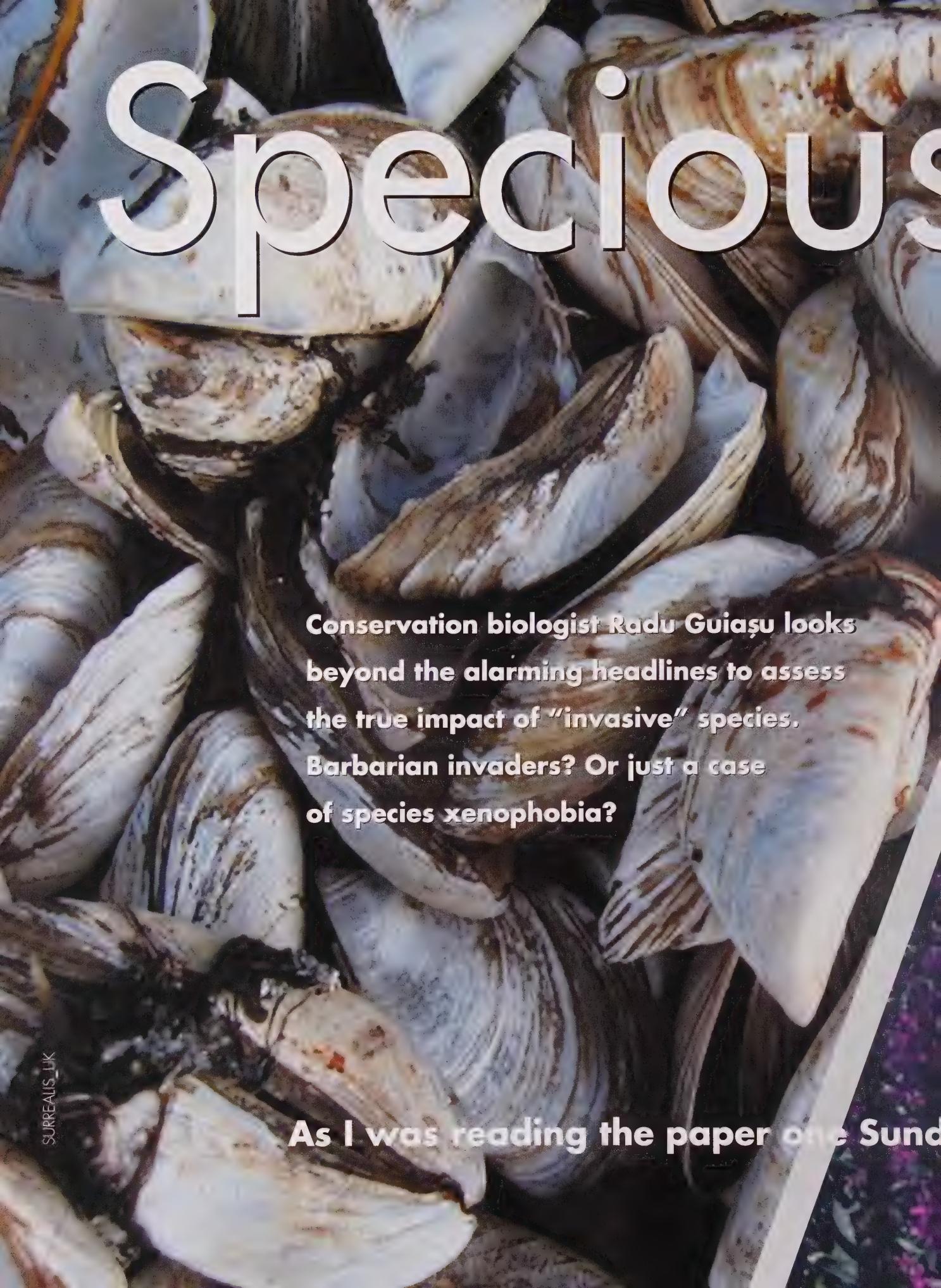
The meaning of each painting was revealed to initiates of the clan at a ceremony where they also learned their clan songs, dances, and the sacred-secret designs for bark and body paintings.

Typical bark paintings tend to narrate activities in the Dreamtime—a time before time when Ancestral Beings shaped the world and established separation between the human and natural species and the niches they would occupy in the world. These Beings left streams of spiritual substance in their wake, which imbued the land with its significance and fixed the identities of the people associated with that land.

This particular painting, created c. 1970 by Narritjin of the Manggallii group from Northeast Arnhem Land, tells the story of two Dreamtime fishermen who came to the region's shore in a paperbark canoe (top left). There they found a sacred mangrove statue (bottom right) and performed a ceremony in celebration (bottom left). Later one of them died and ascended to the Milky Way (vertical central panels).

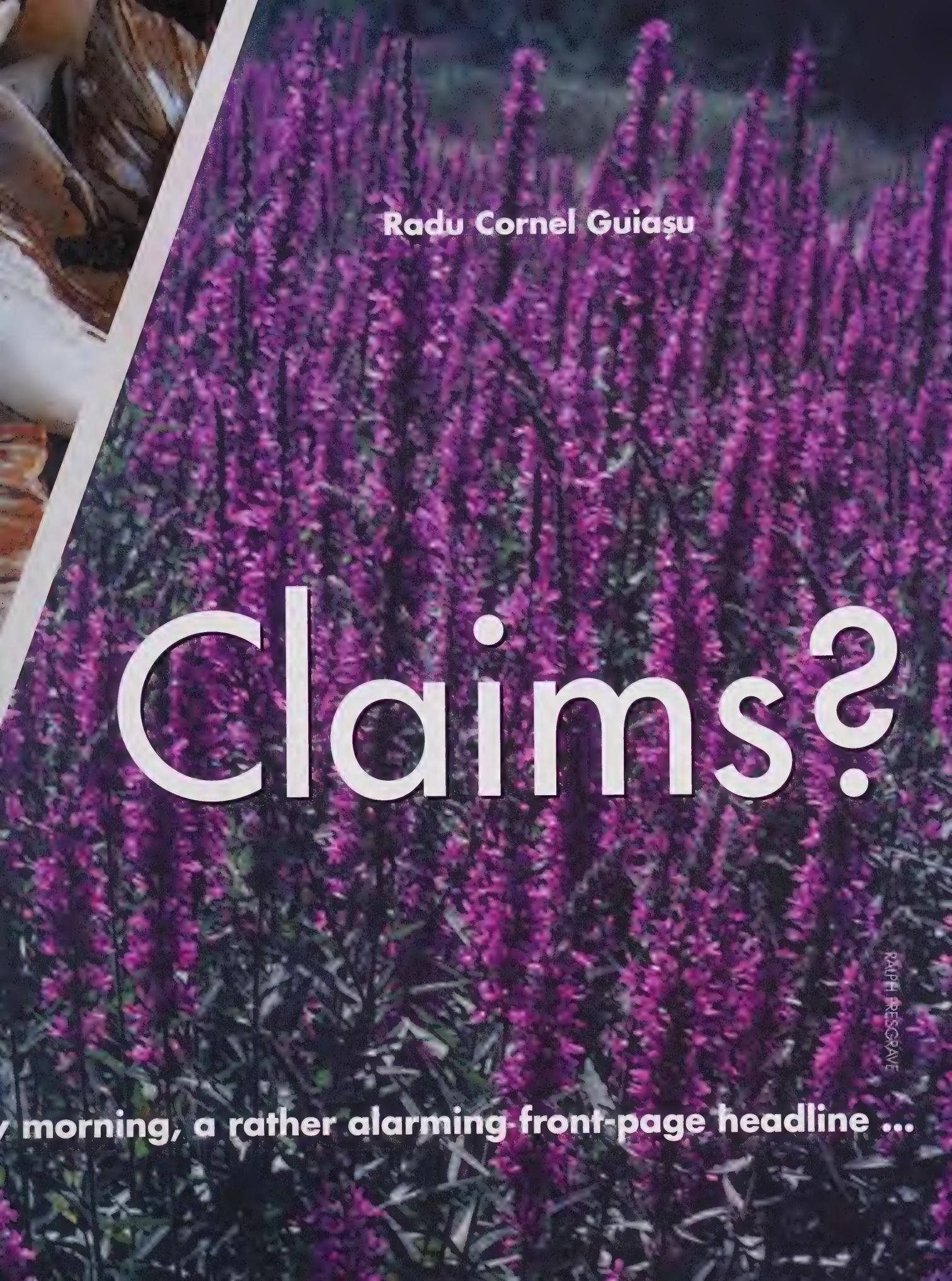
— Adapted from text by Dr. David Turner

Specious



Conservation biologist Radu Guiasu looks beyond the alarming headlines to assess the true impact of “invasive” species. Barbarian invaders? Or just a case of species xenophobia?

As I was reading the paper one Sunday,



Radu Cornel Guiasu

claims?

RALPH RESGRAVE

morning, a rather alarming front-page headline ...

... caught my eye: “Attack of the killer worms—foreign invaders threaten saplings and trilliums.”

Reading further, I discovered that the article was referring to some inconspicuous non-native earthworm species introduced into Ontario hundreds of years ago whose only apparent crime is eating leaf litter. A harmless activity. The article was vague about the threat but appeared to suggest that these worms have a negative impact on soil, although in the fourth paragraph the author confessed that no formal studies have been conducted in Ontario. Mere “anecdotal reports” of the earthworm invasion were circulating. So much for grabbing readers’ attention.

Introduced earthworms—whose aeration of soil and recycling of nutrients are generally good for plant life—are not the only non-native species to receive negative press coverage lately. In recent years, many of the nature articles I’ve read have mentioned one threat or another from “invasive” species said to be poised to take over our water, soil, and forests, destroying everything in their path. The fact that a species may have originated elsewhere—even if it arrived in North America centuries ago and has had no discernible, scientifically proven negative impact on its new surroundings—seems to be enough to generate this type of bad publicity. Even worse, often, the proposed solution for getting rid of these non-native species is a controversial control program. These programs, which can be expensive and unnecessary, sometimes also create problems for innocent bystander species.

Such news articles have not arisen out of nowhere. They mirror a trend begun among some conservation biologists within the last two decades. This trend, which has intensified in the last few years, is called invasion biology, a new branch of conservation biology. Through my teaching of conservation biology at York University’s Glendon College and the fieldwork I have conducted in ecology for the past 16 years, I have become very much aware of the growing popularity of invasion biology.

Rapid growth in the young field of conservation biology since the 1980s has generally been a positive development. It has led to increased awareness of human threats to the natural world. Many good researchers are working hard to learn more about a variety of species and ecosystems, and the valuable knowledge gained through such vital research is essential for protecting countless endangered animals and plants and preserving many vulnerable natural environments.

And indeed, sensationalism aside, some invasive species can, under certain circumstances, threaten human health, undermine human economic interests, and sometimes add to the risks that vulnerable local species face. The recent arrival in Ontario of the notorious West Nile virus—which is known to infect and kill humans as well as other mammals and many types of birds—is decidedly unwelcome.

But when it comes to the overall impact of many other non-native, or exotic, species the situation is usually more complex. To begin with, it is often quite difficult to ascertain whether a particular species is native to a given area. In many cases, we just don’t know exactly where a particular species originated and when or how it reached a certain region. As well, the various definitions for the terms “native” and “non-native” as they are applied to biological species can be more or less arbitrary. Some authors consider introduced species to be those that have arrived in a particular area since the beginning of recorded human history, and native species those that have either evolved in the region or moved there during prehistoric times. In other studies, species are classified according to their presence or absence at an arbitrary point in time. The year 1500, for example, is often used in Europe to assess whether plant species are native or not.

Because of the uncertainty surrounding the terms native and non-native, in 1996 American biologist James Carlton proposed a third category—cryptogenic species. These are species whose native or exotic status simply cannot be determined based on the available evidence by using any of the standard criteria. A recent example of a difficult-to-assess conservation situation is that of the pool frog (*Rana lessonae*) in the UK. We know that this frog was introduced in the early 1800s from southern Europe, so it was assumed this species was non-native in the British Isles. But a major 2005 study reported that some pool frogs were in fact native to the UK. A team of researchers arrived at this conclusion based on various sources of evidence—among them, examining historical records, DNA data showing that these frogs were not directly descended from the introduced frogs, and the discovery of pool frog remains in the UK dating back 1000 years or so, long before the southern European frogs were introduced. These native pool frogs were more closely related to conspecifics (members of the same species) from

T. A. ARMSTRONG © ROM

© JAN ŠEVČÍK, CZECH REPUBLIC

Opening spread: Recent research reveals that zebra mussels and purple loosestrife, two of Ontario's most notorious invasive species, may not be as harmful as previously believed.

This Page, Top: The introduced black locust tree may have been native in Ontario prior to the Ice Age. Middle: The non-native mute swan is a target of control programs in some US states. Bottom left: Some pool frog populations are considered native to Britain while others are not. Bottom right: Seeds of the introduced bull thistle are a favourite food of some native North American birds.



RICHARD M. SAUNDERS

Sweden and Norway than to the southern European frogs. Since there is no evidence of any historical introductions from Scandinavia, for now at least, some *R. lessonae* frog populations in the UK are considered native while others are considered exotic.

The difference between the two may seem purely academic, but it is not a trivial matter. Native status may afford a certain level of protection for a species, whereas an “introduced” designation may label it, in the words of the study’s authors, “an undesirable alien.” Should some ancient historical records come to light one day indicating that a Viking warrior carried a pool frog or two to Britain more than 1,000 years ago, the conservation status of this species may be revised yet again.

Species distributions are not frozen in time and space. They change continuously in response to changing environmental conditions—with or without human interference. In my own studies of crayfish, for example (see sidebar “The Reviled Rusty Crayfish”), the species *Cambarus robustus* has expanded its range in central Ontario, possibly at the expense of another crayfish, *C. bartonii*. But scientists were not concerned about this and never considered intervening because the process was deemed “natural”—both species are considered native to Ontario. But when the crayfish *Oncorhynchus rusticus*, assumed to be an introduced species in the province, expands its range, as it has in various places in the province, some biologists feel compelled to intervene and stop the range expansion or remove this crayfish altogether.

One problem that arises with this kind of intervention is that identifying a species is not as straightforward as it may seem. Other crayfish species, such as *O. luteus*, found in parts of the US, are sometimes mistaken for *O. rusticus*, as are hybrids between different species—*O. rusticus* and *O. limosus*, for instance. There are also regional variations among populations of the same species. Thus, control programs targeting a certain species can backfire, destroying similar-looking species in the process, particularly when experts are not involved.

Another problem with control programs is that they often attempt to eradicate unwanted species by a variety of unsavoury means, such as poisons. These methods can unintentionally kill non-target species as well. In New Zealand, for example, poisons used to eradicate mice also killed the North Island saddleback, a rare native forest bird. Such programs can also be unpopular. In the US, concerned citizens have led legal challenges to stop wildlife management organizations from killing the graceful mute swan, a species introduced from Eurasia in

the mid-1800s. The control programs, which took place in states such as Rhode Island and Maryland, involved destroying eggs and removing adult birds. Advocates of such programs say the swans sometimes attack people, but fail to mention that such attacks typically occur when the birds are protecting their nests from intruders. Mute swans have been a beautiful presence in some of our urban ponds and marshes—including those along the Toronto waterfront—for well over a century.

In Ontario, all the species that live here now arrived relatively recently (compared to the 3.5 billion years of life on Earth)—within the last 10,000 years or so. About 12,000 years ago, towards the end of the last Ice Age, Ontario was covered by huge ice sheets hundreds of metres thick. As the ice retreated northward, species from ice-free regions to the south began moving gradually into the province to occupy newly available habitats. Crayfish species such as *Cambarus robustus*, which presumably reached Ontario on its own after the last glaciation, are considered native, while species such as *Oncorhynchus rusticus*, which arrived as recently as several decades ago, perhaps initially with some human help, are assumed to be introduced.

For other species, such as the black locust tree (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), there is evidence that they lived in Ontario before the last Ice Age but haven’t had time to get back here again naturally just yet. To date, this tree species has expanded its range northward on its own only as far as Pennsylvania. But human reintroduction programs have brought the species back to Ontario to reforest polluted habitats where few other trees can survive. This very useful ability allows the black locust to prosper in urban and industrial areas and it is a boon in many of Toronto’s wooded ravines because its roots are also particularly good at preventing erosion. Yet despite its usefulness and history of being native to the province, the black locust tree is still referred to in several field guides as an aggressive invader in Ontario—simply because it was reintroduced by humans. The same field guides advise readers to pick introduced flowers freely but not to touch native ones. This kind of advice can encourage the mistreatment of certain species and perhaps even interfere with the public’s enjoyment of the beauty and diversity of nature. It may be more difficult to enjoy a walk in the woods if you are constantly on the lookout for species that are not allowed to be there.

Although only a small percentage of introduced species become invasive and cause widespread and well-documented harm to the environment, certain biologists

PHIL MYERS, ANIMAL DIVERSITY WEB



The Reviled Rusty Crayfish: Hated Invader or Native Son?



Middle:
Introduced in Ontario,
the rusty crayfish is subject to
population control if it expands its range.
Top and bottom: When the native crayfish
Cambarus robustus (top) expands its
range at the expense of another
native *C. bartonii* (bottom)
the process is consid-
ered natural.

Most of my work as a conservation biology instructor at York University and a field researcher in ecology for the last 16 years focuses on the conservation, ecology, and behaviour of Ontario's crayfish species. I have tracked the changing distributions of several of these crayfishes by analyzing specimens and records stored in the collections of the Royal Ontario Museum. In the field, I have studied current crayfish habitats and locations. What I've learned reveals much about invasive and native species.

Orconectes rusticus, the rusty crayfish, is the most reviled crayfish in North America today. Considered invasive in many parts of the continent, including Ontario, it is currently the target of a number of control programs that aim to eradicate it from certain lakes and streams. But the exact initial native range of the rusty crayfish is unclear. According to some experts, this crayfish might well have lived in Ontario originally. Biologists know that the species is native to nearby Michigan and Ohio. And we know that this resourceful crayfish can survive in a variety of aquatic habitats, from small ponds to fast streams. So it is able to spread quite well naturally.

Often, biologists assume the rusty crayfish was introduced into Ontario by US fishermen who used it as bait. But for the most part, we are just not sure how the crayfish arrived here. It is very likely that some of the range expansions into Ontario were natural—in other words, they increased their range without human help.

The rusty crayfish is disliked because it is accused of outcompeting other crayfish of its genus, such as *O. virilis* and *O. propinquus*, in parts of the US and Ontario. But it should be noted that while *O. rusticus* does seem to replace species such as *O. virilis* at certain locations, the phenomenon is highly variable and influenced by local conditions. Both *O. virilis* and *O. propinquus* remain quite abundant and very widespread in North America in general, and in Ontario in particular. In fact, *O. virilis* is the most widely dispersed crayfish in Canada. Not one of Ontario's lake and river crayfish species is currently threatened. The only vulnerable crayfishes in this province are the semi-terrestrial burrowing ones (see *Rotunda* Summer/Fall 2002), but their plight has nothing to do with the rusty crayfish.

So, branding species with native or non-native status is not straightforward. Such labels are often dependent on individual local jurisdictions in charge of species management. The crayfish *O. virilis* is considered native in places such as Wisconsin and Ontario, but invasive in North Carolina, while *O. propinquus* is listed as native in southern Wisconsin, but invasive in the northern part of that state. Following this line of reasoning further, we can envisage a scenario in which a species can be native on one side of a road, but invasive if it ever crosses over to the other side.

—RCG

and wildlife managers continue to consider virtually all non-native species as potentially harmful. Dividing the natural world into “good” and “bad” species is a highly subjective exercise, one often based more on current human needs or preferences than solid ecological principles. Our epic struggle against harmless introduced dandelions in order to “save” lawns and golf courses is one such example of a current double standard. Lawns are essentially monocultures of usually introduced grass species (such as Kentucky bluegrass), which, due to frequent mowing, are not even allowed to complete their life cycles. As a result, lawns are not exactly as “natural” as we might assume.

But even well-known invasive species, such as zebra mussels, can have positive effects on some local species and ecosystems. These mussels arrived in the Great Lakes region from Europe in the mid-1980s in the ballast water of ships. After their initial rapid expansion, there is now evidence that in some Ontario locations zebra mussel populations are stabilizing or even declining. At many locations along the Canadian shoreline of Lake Ontario, the newly introduced quagga mussels have largely replaced zebra mussels. Both zebra and quagga mussels have become important food sources for several local species in Ontario, including various crayfishes and fish, as well as waterfowl, such as the lesser scaup, the greater scaup, and the bufflehead. At Long Point, on the shore of Lake Erie, for example, these waterfowl eat large quantities of introduced mussels, keeping mussel populations in check naturally.

Another oft-heard complaint about non-native species is that they reduce our biodiversity. But the evidence for such statements is often controversial or lacking. In a major recent study on purple loosestrife, researchers Heather Hager and Karen McCoy reviewed all available information and found no solid evidence in support of the idea that this much-maligned introduced plant has a negative effect on our wetlands. On the contrary, it seems that many insect species, including native ones, feed on the plant. Yet textbooks and brochures continue to label purple loosestrife as a marauding invader that should be controlled by drastic means.

In the Greater Toronto Area the vascular plant biodiversity has actually increased within the last century or two because of the addition of exotic species. According to recent estimates, approximately 750 of the 1000 or so native plants initially found in the GTA before rapid urbanization began are still present in the city, and about 500 exotic plants have become established there. Hundreds of introduced plants coexist with native ones in the

city’s ravines, creating a unique urban ecosystem. These exotics contribute to our environment in many ways—they generate oxygen, store carbon dioxide, and provide food and shelter for a variety of native and non-native animal species. The seeds of the introduced bull thistle are a favourite food of the native American goldfinch, introduced honeybees pollinate a variety of flowers, and non-native city pigeons are the main prey of the native endangered peregrine falcon, to list just a few of the many cases of vital native-exotic interactions. Trying to pull apart the complex ecological strands that currently tie all these species together, and removing plants and animals simply because they may not have been here at some arbitrary point in the past, could actually make our fragile urban ecosystems less functional and less diverse.

Recently, for example, volunteers in Toronto’s High Park undertook a targeted removal of non-native plants, including honeysuckle and buckthorn. Such programs may be well intentioned, but their ecological value is questionable. These shrubs, which are among the first to have been introduced into Ontario from Britain centuries ago, seem to thrive in our urban parks and offer valuable habitat for a variety of bird species. And, as with crayfish, because introduced shrub species can look quite similar to native shrubs, mistaken species identity is always a concern. The aim of this removal program was the preservation of a few oak trees, which are particularly vulnerable to pollution and are therefore unlikely to do well in the city. Before engaging in such control programs, we should ask ourselves what we are trying to accomplish. Are we trying to restore the local environment to the way it was in, say, 1850? Why not 1790 or 1640? Is this a realistic goal in today’s cities, and are they more “natural” places because these shrubs have been removed?

As urban areas continue their rapid expansion and new subdivisions swallow up more and more land, I, for one, am grateful for every little woodlot that survives, even if it hosts such exotic species as Norway maple and Austrian pine, which are particularly well adjusted to city conditions.

We know that deliberate species introductions can have unpredictable consequences and they should never be attempted casually. But the same is true of control programs against targeted species. Neither should be undertaken without conclusive scientific research and careful consideration. Perhaps the best thing we can do for many wilderness areas, and the species they shelter, is to leave them alone as much as possible and allow them to continue to exist and evolve on their own. ROM

Adaptation — Darwin Style



Top: The native North American apple maggot fly became a parasite of this fruit only after the apple tree was introduced from Europe. Middle: The cane toad, an introduced species in Australia, has adapted its size and toxicity in its new homeland. Bottom: The seeds of the introduced bull thistle are a favourite food of the native North American goldfinch.

Key concepts in evolutionary biology, such as natural selection, adaptation, and speciation, as set out by Charles Darwin in his classic book *On the Origin of Species* and his other writings, are essential to understanding the long-term impact of introduced species.

Adaptation to new environments for example is often a hallmark of successful introduced species. The marine, or cane, toad (*Bufo marinus*), which is native to South America but has been introduced into several other parts of the world, is one example. The world's largest toad, it was brought to Australia in 1935 to control beetles that were devastating sugarcane crops. It spread quickly and now occupies a large area of the country. The toad's two large poison glands can kill a predator within 15 minutes of an attempted attack on the toad. Predators that survive may learn to avoid the toads. But recent studies have shown that the cane toads themselves have changed morphologically since their arrival in Australia. With far fewer predators than in their homeland, and therefore under less pressure to out-adapt their enemies, Australian cane toads have been getting progressively smaller over time—in overall body size and in the relative size of their poison glands. The toads are now less toxic than they used to be, and their impact on native predators is therefore decreasing.

Some of the toad's main predators in Australia, native snakes, are in turn adapting to the presence of their lethal prey. Over the decades, the snakes have increased in body size, which makes them more able to withstand toad poison. And they have developed smaller mouths, which make them less able to ingest a deadly toad. Both adaptations enhance the snakes' ability to survive a cane toad encounter. Significantly, these changes have not occurred in all native snakes but only in those species that interact with the cane toad. So, sometimes, the impact of invasive species is minimized naturally over time, thanks to adaptive changes in both the exotic and the native species.

Occasionally, the introduction of non-native species even leads to speciation events—the formation of new species from older ones. The apple maggot fly (*Rhagoletis pomonella*), is one possible example of speciation in progress. This native North American fly species is a fruit parasite and at one time laid its eggs exclusively in the fruit of hawthorn trees, which are also native to North America. But after apple trees were introduced from Europe about 300 years ago, some flies started laying their eggs in the apples instead. This phenomenon was first observed in 1864. Today, some *R. pomonella* populations have adjusted to life as apple parasites, while other populations of this fly species have remained hawthorn parasites. Over time, genetic differences have emerged between these distinct fly populations, as each becomes increasingly specialized in response to its particular plant host. Although flies from the two populations can still interbreed if they are brought together in the laboratory, they do not usually do so in the field, since each prefers to complete its life cycle on a different tree species.

— RCG



The Two Faces of Vajrapāṇi

Could a scruffy ruffian
and a princely figure
represent one and the
same Buddhist being?

Our intrepid researcher
cracks the case.

By Elizabeth Anne Knox

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Left: Head of Vajrapāṇi, painted with pigment, late 5th century (450 to 499 CE), Ajanta Caves, India.
Right: Grey schist carving, late 1st to 3rd century (50 to 299 CE), India.

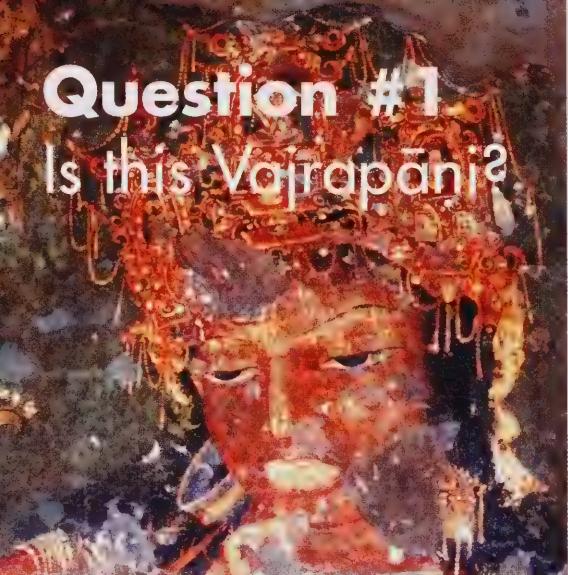
My first face-to-face encounter with the gloriously elegant painted figure was in the Buddhist caves at Ajanta in the Indian state of Maharashtra in 1988. The sumptuous princely figure is a bodhisattva—a lordly being in the Buddhist pantheon who embodies wisdom and compassion. The bodhisattva's aim: to ensure that all living beings attain enlightenment. This particular one, since adorning the cover of South Asian art historian Susan Huntington's book *The Art of Ancient India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain*, had become something of a celebri-

ty. Seeing the painting in person, I was impressed with his bejewelled resplendence, his regal bearing . . . and his sultry pout. But who was he?

His image was created around the last quarter of the 5th century along with the other nearby carvings and frescoes at Ajanta. During that period, the emerging importance of the bodhisattva is reflected in this Buddhist cave art in a common iconic form called the Buddha triad: a central Buddha figure flanked by two bodhisattvas. A series of triads in the

Question #1

Is this Vajrapāṇi?



Point #1

An iconic form of Buddhist art called a Buddha triad shows Buddha flanked by two bodhisattvas. In the region we are studying, the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi, identified by the thunderbolt he holds in his hand (framed in red), is always on the Buddha's left (our right).



Point #3

In nearby caves at Ellora and Aurangabad the bodhisattvas to Buddha's left also hold no thunderbolt but they are consistently accompanied by a small companion (boxed in gold, and shown at right) .

Point #4

The small companions in Hindu are known to be personified weapons. Close examination of the small figures in Ellora and Aurangabad reveals them to be personified thunderbolts. They therefore identify the figure they accompany as Vajrapāṇi.

Left: Cakrapurusa, (the personified discus). Bronze figure, c. 500 CE. Kashmir. ROM. Right: Three-headed Vishnu with four arms, resting his hand on his personified discus. Rare bronze figure, early 7th century CE, Northern Pakistan. Opposite page: This bodhisattva is identified as Vajrapāṇi by the smaller figure with crossed arms accompanying him—his personified thunderbolt weapon. Painted with pigment at left side (our right) of enshrined Buddha. Cave 1, Ajanta, India. Late 5th century CE.



Point #2

Our princely bodhisattva figure from the Ajanta caves is positioned in the usual spot to Buddha's left in the triad, but he holds no thunderbolt (red "X") or other identifying feature.



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Opposite page: A Buddhist triad showing Vajrapāṇi to Buddha's left, holding the thunderbolt (at his left thigh), and Avalokiteśvara to Buddha's right with a lotus rising behind his left shoulder.

Relief carving, Cave 26, Ajanta, India. Above: To the right of the enshrined Buddha (the shrine is not shown) is Avalokiteśvara while our mysterious bodhisattva is to the left (our right). Painted with pigment, Cave 1, Ajanta, India. Both are late 5th century CE.

Opposite page, left: In this Buddha triad, the bodhisattva to Buddha's left places his hand on the head of a small figure with crossed arms. Between caves 3 and 4, Ellora, India. Right: The small figure that accompanies this bodhisattva also has crossed arms and a thunderbolt emerging from the top of his head. Cave 2, Ellora, India. This page, left: This small companion has crossed arms, a fighting stance, and a thunderbolt emerging from the top of his head. Carving, to the left of enshrined Buddha, Cave 5, Aurangabad, India. Right: A very similar companion. Cave 6, Ellora, India. All are 6th century CE.

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Point #5

On closer inspection, our bodhisattva has a small personified thunderbolt with him.

Answer
Yes, the
princely figure
is Vajrapāṇi.

BETH KNOX

cave that archaeologists call Cave 26 shows the Buddha always flanked by the same two bodhisattvas: on his right is Avalokiteśvara, identified by the padma lotus he holds, and on his left is Vajrapāṇi, distinguished by the vajra, or thunderbolt, visible in his clenched fist. The name Vajrapāṇi means "he who holds the vajra (thunderbolt) in his hand."

The sultry figure I first encountered—in Cave 1—is part of a form of triad with each bodhisattva flanking the entrance to a Buddha shrine. As usual, Avalokiteśvara is on the enshrined Buddha's right and this sultry figure stands to the enshrined Buddha's left. But the key element that would identify him as Vajrapāṇi is missing. He holds no thunderbolt and carries no other identifying attribute. Was he Vajrapāṇi or not? I couldn't be certain.

But something else puzzled me as I admired the many splendid Ajanta Vajrapāṇis. I was quite familiar with some earlier 1st- to 3rd-century carvings from Gandhāra—present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan—that depicted Vajrapāṇi as a muscular ruffian wearing the skimpy dress of the working class, menacingly wielding his thunderbolt. Clearly, he was no princely bodhisattva. Yet he bears the same name as the aristocratic bodhisattvas of Ajanta, and like them he carries a thunderbolt.

In 5th- to 6th-century Buddhist art, Vajrapāṇi is a well-known and revered bodhisattva—an image at odds with his appearance and demeanour in the Gandhāran carvings. How could it be that two figures so little alike represent the same being? The scholarly literature offered no solution. Nor did it shed any light on the identity of the sultry bodhisattva. So I set out to solve these

two Buddhist mysteries myself.

First, I decided to find out if the sultry figure really was Vajrapāṇi. In 1993, I took a second research tour to the Ajanta region, and I compared the various Buddha triads, extensively photographed the caves, and spent long hours poring over my images of the region's iconography. Before long I made a telling discovery. I uncovered a novel way of identifying Vajrapāṇi.

At two Buddhist cave sites near Ajanta—Ellora and Aurangabad—I found several bodhisattva figures like our sultry one, occupying the same spot in the Buddha triad and holding no thunderbolt, but every one of them is accompanied by a small combative companion. At Ellora, in Cave 2, one of these small figures has his right ankle crossed over his left knee, his arms crossed in front of his chest, and the tip of a thunderbolt, or vajra, apparently rising from his head of tight curls. Another one, outside Cave 3, on whose head the bodhisattva's hand is resting, has no visible thunderbolt, but his arms are crossed in exactly the same way. A third, at the shrine entrance to Cave 6, takes the form of an adolescent boy, and again his arms are crossed at his chest, his legs are flexed in a martial stance, and the thunderbolt is clearly visible emerging from his head. At Aurangabad, I found the same thing in Cave 5: the bodhisattva attended by a small companion with crossed arms, aggressive leg position, and a thunderbolt emerging from his head.

I began to suspect that the small companion was Vajrapāṇi's personified thunderbolt weapon. If I was right, any bodhisattva accompanied by this small companion could be clearly identified as Vajrapāṇi. I had seen weapon personification before.

The Hindu god Vishnu's weapons are well known in personified form. Two elements distinguish the weapon personification figure: the weapon emerges from the top of the personified weapon figure's head and the deity or figure he accompanies rests his hand on the smaller personified weapon figure. But I couldn't recall having seen this convention in Buddhist art.

During that same trip in 1993, as my suspicion gathered force, I came across a cave in the suburbs of Mumbai depicting the Hindu god Indra with his personified thunderbolt—but shown as part of a Buddhist paradise. This image showed that personified weapon iconography was used in Buddhist art! The weapon figure, sitting directly behind Indra, has his arms crossed over his chest and the thunderbolt can be clearly seen emerging from the top of his head—exactly the same as the small bodhisattva companions at Ellora and Aurangabad. I realized that the small figures must indeed represent Vajrapāṇi's personified weapon, Vajrapuruṣa. So while the figures at Ellora and Aurangabad hold no thunderbolt, being accompanied by the small personified thunderbolt figure clearly identifies them as Vajrapāṇi.

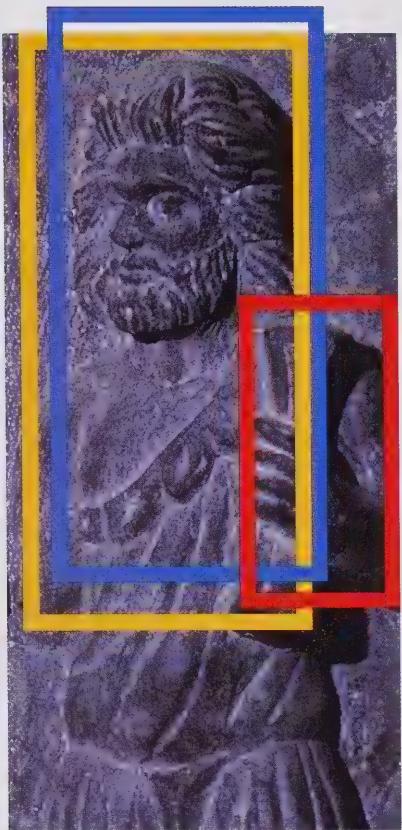
But what about my sultry bodhisattva from Ajanta? I decided to go back and look more closely at a photo of the elegant figure that first caught my attention—and sure enough, I now saw a small dark figure standing beside him that I hadn't noticed before. The bodhisattva seems to lean on the smaller man's shoulder. While the painting is badly damaged here and the details are not clear, it appears that the smaller figure's arms do indeed cross over his chest. The presence of the Vajrapuruṣa could now identify this sultry

Question #2
Why does
the ruffian
(from the
1st to 3rd
century)
have the
same name
as the princely
bodhisattva
Vajrapāṇi
(from the late
5th century)...

...when
they look so
different?

Point #1:

The ruffian Vajrapāṇi (boxed in gold at left) has the same characteristics as the personified weapon figures (boxed in gold below)—the thunderbolt forms part of his person, he is dressed in working man's clothes, and his posture is aggressive ...



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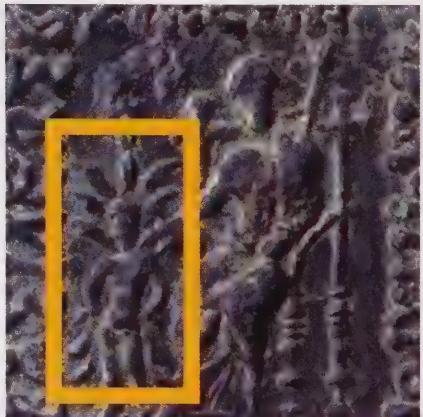


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... But the concept of personified weapons is not documented before the 5th century.

Point #2

A coin dating from 90 to 60 BCE depicts Zeus with his personified thunderbolt weapon, the same iconography as later Hindu versions of the personified weapon.



COURTESY PETER A. LINENTHAL COLLECTION

Coin, c. 90 to 60 BCE, Pakistan, shows the enthroned Zeus reaching to his personified weapon, depicted as a young man with a thunderbolt emerging from the top of his head.

Answer
**The ruffian is
not Vajrapāṇi,
but Vajrapāṇi's
personified
weapon.**



Vajrapāṇi's personified thunderbolt weapon, the Vajrapuruṣa, is shown in his own niche outside the door of a shrine on the balcony of Cave 10. Ellora, India. 6th century CE

prince as the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi. First mystery solved.

But that same solution started the wheels turning on my second mystery—how this 5th- or 6th-century princely bodhisattva and the 1st- to 3rd-century pugilistic figure from Gandhāra could both be Vajrapāṇi. A new possible identity for the Gandhāran Vajrapāṇi struck me. In the personified weapon figures from Ellora and Aurangabad, the thunderbolt forms part of their being and they are aggressive in posture—precisely the characteristics of the Vajrapāṇi from the Gandhāran carvings. The Gandhāran Vajrapāṇi operates like a personified weapon. He dresses for action. He attacks miscreants. Having the thunderbolt ever at hand attests uniquely to his identification with the vajra. He is dedicated to protecting the Buddha. In all essential respects, he appears not to be the princely figure of Vajrapāṇi himself, but the personified thunderbolt weapon, Vajrapuruṣa.

There remains only one problem with this identification: the timing. In South Asian art the concept of weapon personification is not documented before the 5th century. The Gandhāran carvings date from the 1st to the 3rd century—far too early to be certain that this figure could be a personified weapon. Could the similar function and appearance of the Buddhist personified weapon figures and the ruffian companion from the Gandhāran carvings simply be coincidental, I wondered. I needed more evidence that weapon personification existed as early as the 1st to 3rd centuries.

One of the best tools for the South Asian history scholar is numismatics—the study of coins. Coinage not only clarifies dynastic history and the boundaries of em-

pire but, as in this case, it provides critical information about contemporary intellectual context. In the Punjab in northern Pakistan from c. 90 to c. 60 BCE the Indo-Scythian ruler Maues minted an extensive series of coins. One of these coins held the answer to my question. The coin depicts the Greek god Zeus (the Greek influence remained from Alexander the Great's presence in the region) with his right arm reaching towards the shoulder of a small boy who has a spiky rendition of Zeus's weapon, the thunderbolt, rising from the top of his head—the two features that represent a weapon personification. Zeus's gesture—touching the shoulder of the child above whose head the thunderbolt rises—is the same one used in the later South Asian context to show the relationship between a deity and his personified weapon. There can be no question that the concept of personified weapon as attribute predates by nearly two centuries the Gandhāran reliefs showing the ruffian Vajrapāṇi. Exactly the evidence I had been seeking.

As it turns out, the two mysteries have the same resolution. Vajrapāṇi as ruffian in working-man's clothes, carrying the thunderbolt as he protects Buddha in the Gandhāran works, clearly personifies the thunderbolt. While in these early depictions he is too meanly attired and servile in function to be considered a bodhisattva, his assistance is nonetheless vital to the Buddha's mission. His importance is so great that when bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi appears in the later 5th century in all his splendour in the Maharashtra caves, in beautiful figures like my sultry one, his identifying mark, his Vajrapuruṣa, remains by his side both to protect and—I now realize—to identify him. ROM

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Indian Case Study

This South Asian box, rich in symbolic decoration, would have had one of two uses. **By Sarah Richardson**

Dear ROM Answers,

I purchased this case from an antique shop in Montreal 40 years ago. The owner of the shop had bought it at a house sale and didn't know what it was used for. I would love to know.

I. E., NORTH YORK

Dear I. E.,

Thank you for the letter and photographs of your bronze box. Your container is certainly South Asian in origin, probably made in India in the

early 20th century. The central peacock ornament unscrews to enable the opening of six hinged compartments, each of which is also decorated with peacock motifs. In Indian culture, the peacock is an auspicious symbol of wealth, royalty, and love.

Despite the wishes for wealth, such containers would often have been used by ordinary people. Documents show that these cases typically held one of two kinds of items: spices or cosmetics. Typically, the spices that

would have been stored inside were for the preparation of *paan*, an Indian digestive made from betel leaves filled with various nuts, spices, fruits, sugar, and frequently betel nut, which turns the mouth dark red. In northern India *paan* is often eaten after a meal or offered to guests. Your container's compartments are shaped like lobed betel leaves, suggesting this may have been the likely use for it.

The other, more common, use for these boxes was to store traditional In-

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dian cosmetics. Used in this way, the six compartments would have held such cosmetic items as vermillion red powder used by married Hindu women to mark the hair part, sandalwood paste, *tilak* paste for marking the forehead, and black *kohl* for outlining the eyes.

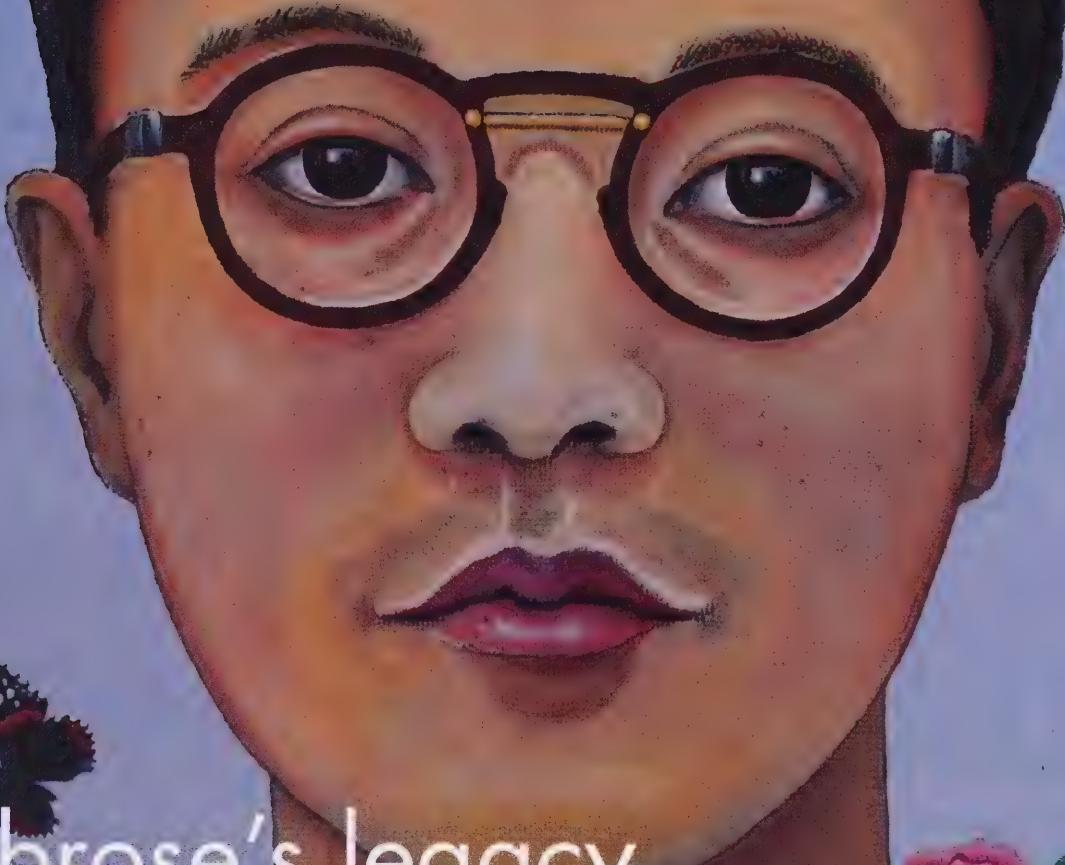
The ROM's South Asian collection holds several such containers, two of which are quite similar to yours. The first, pictured above, though made of bright brass rather than bronze, is embellished with peacock motifs that are decoratively similar to yours, and like your case, it has a prominent central peacock ornament. The second has a dancing female figure as the central ornament and a peacock with its head turned backwards atop each of the six compartments. Inside, the numbers 0 to 5 are written in Devanagari script—the script used in Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, and many other Indian languages. This container was featured in the ROM's recent travelling exhibit "Ornamenting the Ordinary," as one of the many objects from South Asia, even those made for everyday use, that were carefully and symbolically decorated.

Congratulations on owning such a lovely piece of Indian craft and metal work, and thank you for sharing your piece with us.

Sarah Richardson is curatorial assistant, South Asian Art, in the ROM's Department of World Cultures.



Bequest



Ambrose's legacy

Ambrose Wah Hing Lo was proud of his cultural heritage and loved Chinese history, visual art, music, and opera. He would visit the ROM's Chinese collections to savour the serenity of the Buddhist temple wall paintings in the Bishop White Gallery of Chinese Temple Art. Ambrose died in 1999. In 2005, his partner created the **Ambrose Wah Hing Lo Endowment Fund** to support the acquisition of significant Chinese artifacts. Through this fund, Ambrose leaves a legacy of awe, and the hope that future generations will experience the same wonder he felt while gazing at the Chinese collections.



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The Royal Ontario Museum is governed by the *ROM Act* (1968), which established a Board of 21 Trustees. The *Act* mandates that 3 of the 21 Trustees are to be elected by the ROM's general membership. One of the membership-elected Trustee positions becomes vacant June 30, 2008. Nominations for the membership-elected Trustee position will be accepted by the Office of the Secretary to the Board until noon on April 1, 2008. Each nomination must be supported by the signatures of 25 current ROM members (please include the membership numbers of the nominators). The vacant term of office is July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2011. Should more than one duly nominated candidate be eligible, an election will be held. For further details, please call 416.586.5584.

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Pottery Perception: Mapping the meanings of material culture in Africa



JEFF SPFFD

Silvia Forni takes a hands-on approach to her research. Literally. The new curator of the ROM's African collections spent almost a year in the Grassfields region of Cameroon learning traditional pottery techniques—a role that placed her perfectly to study how material culture there relates to gender differences and serves as a means of cultural expression and identity. The village women eagerly welcomed her as their daughter, teaching her the skills they wished they could teach their granddaughters. Silvia, a native of Turin, Italy, understands the young women's refusal to learn this traditional skill in terms of material culture. "Certain objects express, in their making and their use, models of personhood," she says. "In the village

where I worked, clay pots are very strongly connected to womanhood. Refusal to make them is a rejection of the traditional role of women they are trying to go beyond."

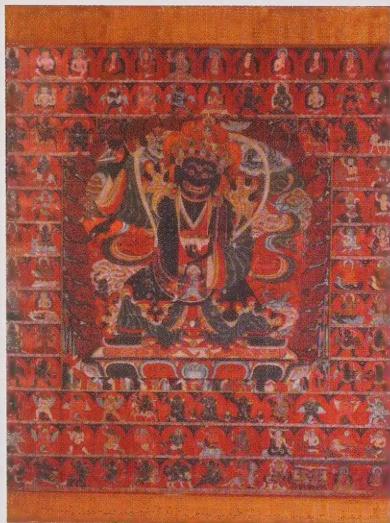
As an undergraduate, Silvia was inspired to study Africa by one of her anthropology professors. She was thrilled when the opportunity came up to work in Algeria, and later she also studied in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Madagascar, as well as Cameroon.

At the ROM, Silvia will draw on her extensive fieldwork to research and build on the Museum's fine African collections, part of which will be on permanent display for the first time in the new Shreyas and Mina Ajmera Gallery of Africa, the Americas, and Asia-Pacific. The dense exhibits reflect the rich cultural tradi-

tions from many areas of Africa, examining themes such as state and traditional power, religious beliefs, and everyday life. "Pottery continues to be one of my great interests," she says. Since this important aspect of African material culture is not well represented in the ROM's collection she will be building on it. She plans to look beyond the classical, to collect contemporary African pieces as well as items produced by the African diaspora—particularly relevant in Toronto. Traditional vessels are still widely used in Cameroon as in many other parts of Africa for ritual purposes, but in the cities, says Silvia, the best-selling items are modern—brightly coloured and depicting contemporary themes and cultural heroes such as soccer players. "This is sometimes looked at by people in the West as a loss of cultural identity," she says, "but it's not. It simply reflects the unavoidable changes and transformations that are integral to every society's material culture." As their creative traditions begin to reflect contemporary meanings, African societies are becoming less "exotic." But there are many extraordinary objects being produced there today. "It would be wonderful if part of this richness could be represented in the ROM's collections," says Silvia.

As part of her larger goal, she is attempting to understand the mechanisms of change at work in contemporary cultures as well as the historical context. The ROM's collections, she notes, house many seeds for further research. Some areas she hopes to research in greater depth: the critical role of objects in connecting individuals and communities to the spiritual world, and how the production and use of objects reflect local ideas of gender, political power, and cosmologies.

Friends of South Asia: Saving a Tibetan Treasure



ROM's painting of *Legden Nagpo Aghora*, on cloth, Tibet, 15th century.

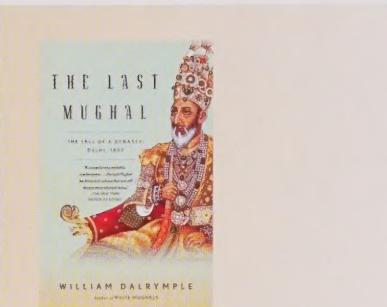
In 1921, a rare 15th-century Tibetan Buddhist painting arrived at the ROM as part of a shipment from China. Missing its traditional textile border, and glued onto large paper panels, the almost six-foot- (1.8-metre-) high painting was far too fragile to go on display. Now the Friends of South Asia Committee is raising funds to restore this hidden treasure.

A highly trained paintings conservator must carefully detach the painting from its paper backing to prepare it for safe storage, future study, and eventual exhibition.

What makes the painting remarkable is its size and its complex iconography. It depicts *Legden Nagpo Aghora*, the Excellent Black One Who is Not Terrifying, a wrathful protector and enlightened being. *Legden* is surrounded by 99 smaller figures: teachers, Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and other fierce protectors. In one hand he carries a cup made from a human skull, a reminder of the impermanence of the body, while in the other he holds a flaying knife, symbolizing his ability to cut away ignorance. In spite of the frightful imagery, *Legden* represents the fierce compassion required in meditation to reach enlightenment.

To launch the fundraising campaign, the Friends of South Asia (FSA) presents an evening with historian William Dalrymple. Join the FSA for this special evening and support their work to save this unique Tibetan painting.

—Sarah Richardson and Piali Roy



An Evening with William Dalrymple

Enjoy a lecture by this internationally acclaimed historian and author of *The Last Mughal: The Eclipse of a Dynasty, Delhi 1857*. The event also launches the Canadian paperback edition of Dalrymple's book. A book sale and signing will follow the lecture.

When: Wednesday, March 26, 2008

Where: Signy and Cléophée Eaton Theatre

Tickets are available online at www.rom.on.ca. Click programs, then ROMlife lectures, then type in the keyword Mughal. Or call 416.586.5797.

ROM Friends

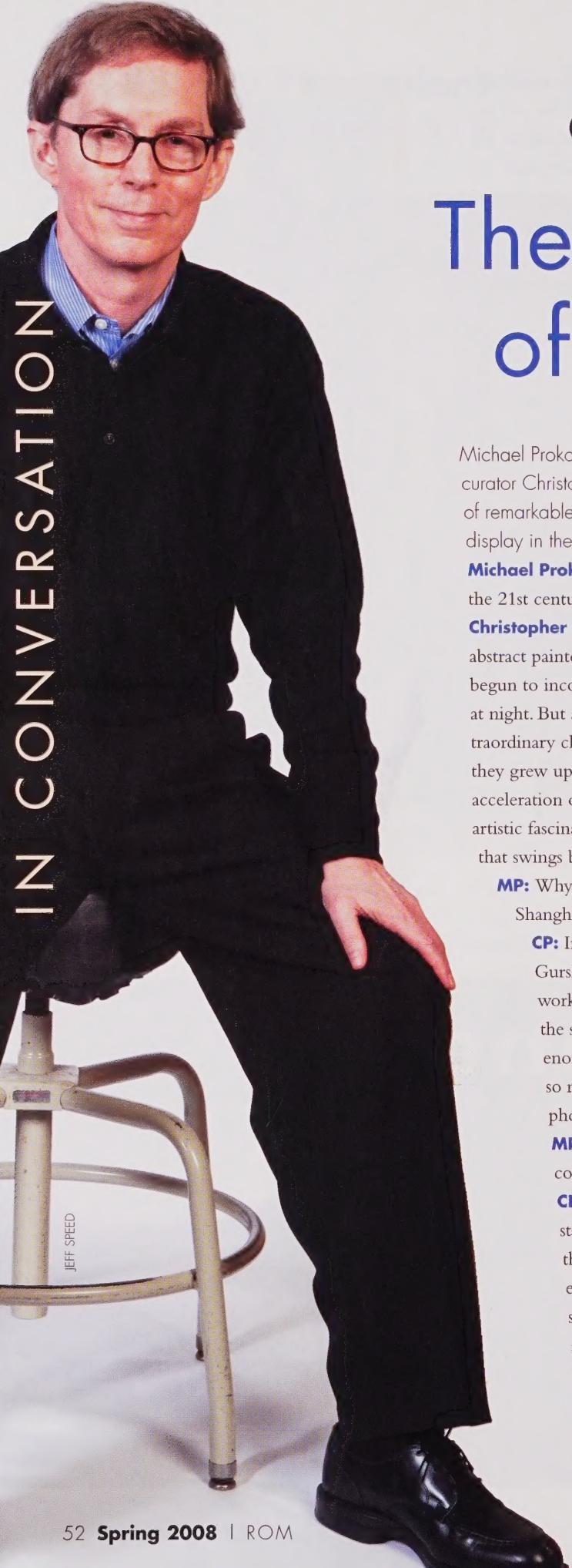
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Christopher Phillips

The Transience of Urban Life

Michael Prokopow, managing director of the ROM's ICC, talked with curator Christopher Phillips about Shanghai, art, and his bringing together of remarkable works for the exhibition *Shanghai Kaleidoscope*, now on display in the ICC's Roloff Beny Gallery.

Michael Prokopow: How has Shanghai's ascendance to being the "city of the 21st century" been revealed in its art?

Christopher Phillips: Shanghai is home to China's largest community of abstract painters, and in recent years the canvases of artists such as Ding Yi have begun to incorporate the pulsating, fluorescent colours that now fill the city at night. But artists in almost every medium have tried to respond to the extraordinary changes taking place: the overnight demolition of neighbourhoods they grew up in, the construction of a dense forest of 40-storey skyscrapers, acceleration of the pace of life to a feverish, nonstop tempo. The result is an artistic fascination with the transience of urban life today, reflected in a mood that swings between exhilaration and anxiety.

MP: Why have photography and video become dominant media in Shanghai and other centres?

CP: In recent decades, we've seen artists such as Jeff Wall and Andreas Gursky making visually spectacular, conceptually challenging photo works that rival the most ambitious contemporary painting. In China, the special appeal of media like these lies in their ability to register enormous social and cultural change quickly. It's for this reason that so many of China's trained painters have turned increasingly to photography and video.

MP: Can you recommend any strategies for how one "looks at" contemporary art?

CP: With almost every work of contemporary art it's possible to find a starting point that's linked to more familiar, traditional approaches. In this show you'll see a work by Shen Fan—a wall-like structure covered with hundreds of glowing neon tubes. It seems forbidding, but soon you discover that each neon element suggests a short brush-stroke. Once you see that, you realize that the entire wall presents a kind of calligraphic landscape and everything falls into place.

Shanghai Kaleidoscope is on display until November 2, 2008.

ICC AT THE ROM

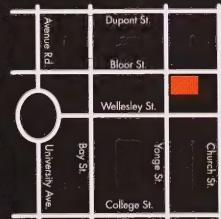
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